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OF GAME

JR HORNBLOW



The gift of

The Estate Of Mary Buckland



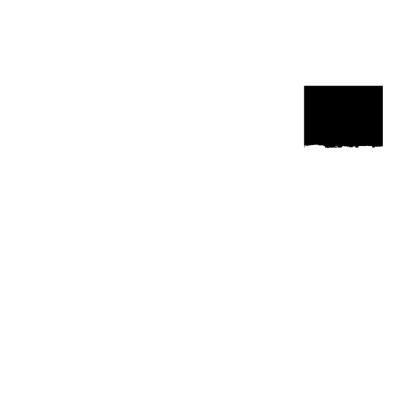




Their lips met in exquisite embrace.

Frontispiece.

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THE END OF THE GAME

A Movel

BY

ARTHUR HORNBLOW

Author of the story, "The Lion and the Mouse"
Novelized from Charles Klein's Play

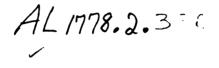
"As in a game of cards, so in the game of life, We must play well what is dealt to us."



Illustrations by

A. E. JAMESON

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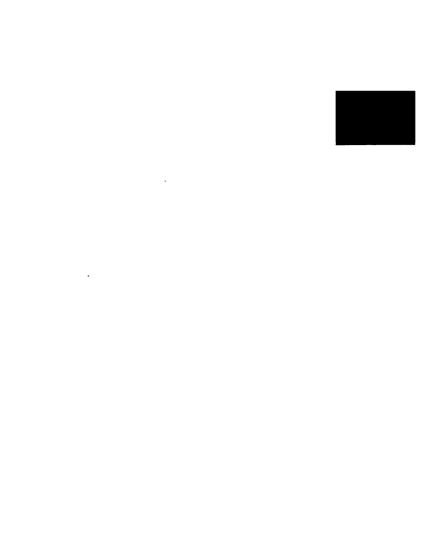
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Issued April, 1907

THE END OF THE GAME



TO MY WIFE THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED





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PART I MORNING

Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present state.—POPE.

The End of the Game

CHAPTER I

A woman's shrill cry of distress suddenly broke the peaceful stillness of the vivid green woods and resounded in strident, vibrating notes through the brambled lanes and shaded glens. The startled birds ceased singing in the trees and a frightened rabbit dashed helter-skelter to cover under the ragged hedge fringing the narrow dusty road, which, like a long, undulating ribbon, curved in and out among the rows of noble oaks and stretches of open farming land that lay between this picturesque wilderness and the good city of Boston.

"Help! help! nelp!" came the cry again, this time in crescendo notes of terror, as if the peril momentarily grew more terrifying. Shriek followed shriek, like waves of agonized sound, which surged up and gradually spent themselves in the distance, only to be sent back mockingly by the far-off blue hills.

The danger was pressing, that was evident. A fellow-creature in distress was sending forth the

urgent summons which human instinct impels every other living being to respond to without question. Yet the effort appeared to be in vain. Not a soul seemed to be within hearing of those heartrending appeals. The nearest house was five miles away and passers-by few and far between. The place was known as Wexford Woods, a somewhat lonely spot of great natural beauty situated a short distance from the main road to the aristocratic suburb of Brookline. The land, semi-mountainous in character, was thickly covered with timber, and through its winding foot paths and in its dark depths of tangled undergrowth one had glimpses of the primeval forest. A little farther on, about a quarter of a mile from the road, began a series of small lakes fed by a branch of the Charles River, and it was from the first of these that came the alarm.

Two young women, one about sixteen, the other a few years her senior, were floundering in the water, while a small rowboat, bottom side up, to which both were clinging, told only too plainly the nature of the accident that had befallen them. The younger girl, unable to swim, clung to the boat's bottom with a tenacious grip born of despair, and her large brown eyes, now opened wide with terror, looked beseechingly at her more self-possessed companion. Every other moment she gave vent to the agonizing shrieks which had startled the animal life everywhere.

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The elder girl, expert in the useful art of natation, was swimming round the boat, making desperate efforts to right it, but in her long skirts, made the heavier by the weight of the water, she found it almost impossible to keep afloat, and every few moments she was compelled to desist and cling to the boat to save herself from going down. They were some way out from the shore, and it was an impossible task to push the boat in. They could only hang on and shout, on the slim chance that some one would hear them and come to their aid. But no sign of alarm, or even of anxiety, was visible on the elder girl's face. Raising her own voice, she, too, shouted for help with all the force of her healthy young lungs. Then she spoke quietly and reassuringly to her companion:

"Don't be frightened, Grace. Just keep cool and cling to the boat. Some one will hear us."

"I can't help it, Eunice," answered the younger girl, "I'm terribly frightened. Suppose no one comes? We can't hold on much longer. My fingers are numbed already."

Her teeth chattered and her lips were turning blue, a condition due to fright rather than to cold, for the day was warm. The young woman she addressed as Eunice noticed these alarming signs, and edged nearer the young girl, so she could catch her and support her in case she fell. "Courage, Grace, dear," she pleaded. "Help must come. They will miss us at the house and come in search of us. God will not desert us now. Come, call with me. Together!"

Both girls once more raised their now fatigued voices in a despairing shout for succor.

Assistance was closer at hand than they dared to hope.

Roy Marshall, on his way home to Alton Court after graduating from Yale University, had left the train at Dedham in order to make a trial spin of the bran new automobile, which, if satisfactory, was to be a gift from his father for having passed successfully through college. Larry Gowan, the family chauffeur, was waiting for him at the railroad station with the machine—a smart \$5,000 touring-car, painted a bright red and luxuriously appointed—and when its future owner caught sight of it as he emerged from the train shed with a crowd of other arrivals, he hastened his step, his face aglow with pleasure.

Roy Marshall was the type of man that appeals particularly to women. He had a strong, clear-cut face, a good nose and a well-shaped mouth, firm and determined-looking when in repose, but expanding readily into a smile, when it revealed two rows of even white teeth. Alert brown eyes, quick to flash

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in moments of anger or excitement, were set back deep under a high brow surmounted with dark wavy hair. It was a strong, pleasant face, the face of a man born to take a dominant position in life, yet who made more friends than enemies. He was considerably over medium height and powerfully built, his square shoulders and bronzed face suggesting plenty of rowing, football and fresh air generally, while he had about him that vague yet unmistakable atmosphere of culture and athletics which distinguishes the college-bred man. A stranger might have guessed his age to be anywhere between twenty-eight and thirty. As a matter of fact, he was not yet twentyfive. He was one of those men who develop early, and his serious, self-confident manner made him appear older than he really was.

At college he was not a particularly brilliant student, save in one branch, of which he was very fond and in which he excelled—applied mechanics. His natural tastes did not lean towards books, but there were few problems in mathematical physics that he could not master with comparative ease. He discussed with facile glibness hydrodynamics, kinematics, the laws of motion, statics of rigid solids and other principles of force and energy, and during vacation practically his only recreation was pottering on impossible experiments in the workshop which he had fitted up near the stable at Alton Court. His pro-

fessors and college chums predicted a brilliant career for him as a civil engineer, but Roy shook his head. Mechanics was to him simply a pastime, a toy. he were to look on it as work to be undertaken seriously it would cease to have further fascination for him. In any case, why should he waste time and nerve tissue studying engineering when he had a career all cut out for him? It was only a question of a few months when he would succeed his father as head of the well-known firm of manufacturing druggists, Marshall & Company, in Boston. He did not think his taste for commercial life would be any keener than his liking for books, but what could he The position was there, ready-made, waiting for him. His father, now an old man, had held it for a quarter of a century, and it was inevitable that he, Roy, should succeed him. It never occurred to him that any other course was open to him.

So the young man set about preparing himself for the important position in the world of commerce that awaited him. He had the sense to know that as principal of an important business house he must be able to understand and grapple with the responsibilities of commercial life when he was face to face with them. He, therefore, neglected the prescribed curriculum at college and became a student of men and human nature rather than of books. He was an omnivorous newspaper reader; he devoured the latest

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works on economic questions; he delighted in dry statistics; he pored over stock-market quotations; he studied the wheat reports; he kept in touch with national and state politics. He was not learned in any branch of knowledge, but he could talk interestingly on nearly every topic, and when he gave any particular subject his attention he generally mastered its details, no matter how difficult.

He was not industrious, yet when driven to the wall he had given evidence of an enormous capacity for hard work which had fairly astonished his professors, and sometimes resulted in his being successful in difficult examinations where more promising men had failed. Another quality in his make-up, which his fellow-students were quick to discover, and which in their eyes more than atoned for his scholastic shortcomings in the class-room, was his prowess on the field. In the college athletics he soon displayed marked executive ability, and the men were not slow to recognize in him a leader. He became captain of the football team, and twice rowed stroke in the 'varsity boat-race. In fact, whatever was going on in the way of strenuous pastimes, Roy Marshall was sure to be the directing figure. Once, in midwinter, during a heavy snowstorm, the men built two opposing forts, divided their forces and charged each other's works with fraternity yells and snowballs. Victory fell to Marshall's party, because,

like Napoleon at Brienne, he had cleverly outmanœuvred the enemy.

For this reason, and also because he spent his liberal allowance freely, Roy was popular, and little occurred at college in which he did not take part. Yet, as a general thing, he held aloof from their more boisterous pranks. He held that a college man may be fond of football and still act as a gentleman, and he had little patience with the educated young hoodlums who frequently disgraced their alma mater in public places. He had also managed to keep clear of scandal in any form. Not that he was a prig. Far from it. He was known as a good fellow and generally liked, only he had in his moral make-up none of that effervescent, turbulent exuberance that most young men of his age think is necessary to get out of their systems before they can settle down to anything serious—a process called sowing one's wild oats, and which, when it yields its always abundant harvest, is known as the devil's own crop. Roy Marshall had sown no wild oats, not because his morals were any better than the next man's, but simply because that sort of thing did not appeal to him. was merely a matter of temperament, or perhaps the lack of it. His father rejoiced to see this natural tendency to sedateness in his son, as it augured well for his future.

One goal Roy Marshall had steadfastly kept before

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his eyes ever since he had ceased being a child-He was impatient to get out into the success! world, eager to essay his strength in the battle of life. His easy optimism encouraged him to dream of high position and great wealth. He was ambitious to make a great name to astonish the world, to become immensely rich. Whether his father's drug business would afford him the opportunity he could not, of course, tell yet. He knew it yielded a good income; they had always been comfortably off, and the firm name, Marshall & Company, ranked among the most important in the country. He would develop it, build it up, extend it until it became the biggest concern in the world, with connecting branches in every important city in the United States, crushing or absorbing all rival concerns until Marshall & Company became a huge trust and sole dispenser of drugs from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Roy Marshall was still In this first flush of emancipation from the thraldom of school life he did not stop to consider the ethical aspect of the Napoleonic business course he planned. He did not stop to consider whether, morally, it was right or wrong to build up his own success on the failure of others ruined by him. the present hour no such scruples disturbed his day Success! Power! That was his aim—his He would become an arbiter in the comambition. mercial world. This was the lever that moved him,

and which stirred him on to constant effort. Success! He was not content to be merely a rich man's son; he would show the world that he had it in him to make his own name and fortune. If he had graduated from college with only average honors, at least he had left his alma mater without discredit, and it was a great satisfaction to feel that his school years were now past and that he was going to settle down seriously to a career and take his place in the busy business world.

He was feeling, therefore, in particularly good spirits on this splendid June afternoon, and he had returned Larry's respectful salute with a more cordial nod than usual.

"She's a beauty, and no mistake, Larry!" he cried, as he walked all around the machine, inspecting every part of it with the critical air of an expert. He knew by heart the construction of all the leading makes of automobiles, and he was as competent to make repairs in the event of a breakdown as any professional chauffeur. There was not a screw, not a rivet that he was not thoroughly familiar with, and the technology of motordom—chassis, spark plugs, carburetors, igniters, clutch, transmission, etc., etc.—so bewildering to the layman, was at the tip of his tongue.

"Shure! She's a daisy—she is that!" replied the man with enthusiasm. "I'm jist after comin' from

the Court wid her, an' she flew as if the divil 'isself was after her—so she did."

Larry Gowan was a smart Irish lad who was formerly a bell-boy in Boston. Mr. Marshall, senior, had noticed him while stopping at the hotel where he was employed, and finding that he was both intelligent and honest had offered him a place as handy man at Alton Court, where he soon made himself a general favorite.

"Start her up, Larry," said his master, jumping in. "We'll be off!"

The man gave the crank half a dozen vigorous turns, and climbed up, while Roy took his place on the driver's seat and gave the steering wheel a scientific twist. He pulled a lever, and slowly the ponderous machine moved majestically out of the railroad station.

The young driver, delighted as a child with a new toy, headed for home and pushed the throttle right over. The splendid car instantly leaped forward with a convulsive bound, as if it were some living thing responding to the whip, and in a few seconds they were doing a thirty-mile-an-hour clip along the dusty country road. The pace was fast, and Roy nodded approvingly at the chauffeur as he noted the smoothness of the running gear and the ease with which the car could be handled.

"She's all right, Larry. She's a winner!" he

shouted. They were moving so fast that the wind drowned his voice.

"Shure! It's yourself will be using her all the time now you're home for good, sorr."

"Yes, Larry—no more school for me. I'm through with Greek and Latin and mathematics. Now I'm going to be a business man. I'll make things hum in that place of ours in Boston!"

The young man drew himself up, and a set, determined expression came into his face, as if he were full of bold schemes for extending his father's business, and already felt the cares and responsibilities of a commercial career.

"Your father'll be glad of that—he will so," said Larry. "He's an old gentleman to have such a care on his hands—sure he is that."

"Yes," replied Roy loftily, "I guess my father will be glad to have me to relieve him. That's why the governor is giving me this machine—to celebrate my becoming a member of the firm." Then, changing the subject, he asked: "How's everyone at the Court—mother, Grace, the Merricks?"

"They're all foine as silk—that's what they are, sorr, except the master, and he's got a touch of the gout. Mrs. Merrick and Miss Merrick is there every day. They wus at the Court when I came away, and I guess they're there still awaitin' for you, sorr."

"Ugh!" grunted Roy.

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It was unwelcome news. He hated to find strangers when he arrived home. He had much to talk about with his mother and sister, and he could not say anything save inane conventionalities in the presence of outsiders, for he insisted that the Merricks were outsiders despite the fact that they were manœuvring hard to insinuate themselves into the family circle. A frown passed over the young man's face, and he bit his lip as he thought of the tacit understanding entered into with his father-that on his return from college he would ask Lucy Merrick to be his wife. The girl had money-lots of it-and money was necessary to develop Marshall & Company on a big scale. Of course she did not care for him any more than he did for her. It was to be a marriage of convenience. They, the Marshalls, were an old family with social prestige and all the rest of it, while the Merricks were parvenus of mushroom growth, sprung up, in a night, from nowhere. they had to offset the Marshall genealogical tree was unlimited credit at the bank. This trafficking with money on one side and birth and position on the other had revolted and disgusted Roy. He balked at the girl, and at first would not hear of the match. Like most young men fired with ambition to achieve big things in the world, he had entertained no desire to marry early. As a rule, it is the poor man who marries young-the man who is lonely and content with little. The man whose head is filled with schemes for fortune building has no time for matrimony. Selfish to what he wrongfully thinks are his best interests, he lets his youth slip away, and when, as the years pass, he realizes his loneliness, he sees he has made a mistake, and that home building and not fortune building should be the object of every man. But then it is too late, and he remains a sour, disgruntled bachelor, a pariah from the human family the rest of his days, with no one for his companion in his old age, no one to console his dying moments, no one to shed a tear over his grave.

Roy had never been particularly attached If he had thought of marriage at all, it was as of something away off in the distant future. Marriage now, he insisted, would seriously hamper his career. But when one night his father came to his rooms at college and dramatically put the situation before him, revealing to him for the first time that the condition of Marshall & Company was not as prosperous as the world supposed, and that the gold of the Merricks was necessary to avert financial ruin, he allowed himself to be talked into taking a more practical and favorable view of this marriage, the very idea of which had previously been abhorrent to Marshall, senior, had asked him to consider the matter carefully, and to do nothing he might regret later, but at the same time the old gentleman

was careful to point out the advantages of making a rich marriage and to lay stress on the discomforts and terrors of comparative poverty. Money, he declared, meant position, power, recognition by the world, while poverty meant humiliation, obscurity, social ostracism. Confronted, therefore, with this critical situation at a moment when the young man thought he must neglect nothing to assure his future, it is not surprising that Roy Marshall began to look on this matrimonial arrangement with less aversion.

Yet it was by no means popular with him. He certainly would not have sought it, but it had come to him, it had been imposed on him, and under the stress of peculiar circumstances he had accepted it along with the other necessary evils of life. After all, he argued to himself, if he were obliged to marry, perhaps Lucy Merrick was as good as any other woman. She seemed a harmless kind of girl, over-fond of dress and rather silly, but she was amiable enough, and probably knew how to entertain and manage servants. If he were going to make a success in the world, he would have to entertain a great deal, and so perhaps Lucy Merrick was just the kind of wife he needed.

The car by this time had entered the stretch of wild, uncultivated timber lands known as Wexford Woods, and the cool shade afforded by the majestic oaks that lined both sides of the road was grateful

after the hot glare of the sun. The machine was moving so fast that the trees flying past gave the impression of a rapidly moving panorama.

"She's a flyer, and no mistake!" shouted Roy, delighted at the speed—forty miles an hour—recorded by the speedometer.

"Yes, sorr!" shouted back Larry. "Miss Grace got scared yesterday—she did so. I took she and Miss Vincent out for a spin, and Miss Grace was frightened out of her life, so she was."

"Miss Vincent?" echoed Roy, puzzled. "Who the devil is Miss Vincent?"

"Shure, sorr, it's Miss Grace's governess. It's a foine lady she is. As quiet and refined as a perfect lady, and that's the way with her."

"Oh, yes, I remember now. My mother wrote me about her. Don't fall in love with her, Larry. Governesses are almost as dangerous as widows. They're designing females!"

Roy chuckled at his own pleasantry.

"No fear of that," replied Larry seriously. "Miss Vincent's not for such as me. She's a governess maybe, and has to earn her own livin', like meself, but I know my place, sorr—I do that."

"Where's Grace to-day?" demanded Roy.

He asked the question more to change the subject rather than out of any real concern for his sister. He loved her, of course, in indifferent brotherly

fashion, but he never worried about her, because it never entered his head that she could come to harm. But the man's chatter about the governess was becoming tiresome. Secretly, Roy had not approved of this new addition to the family circle. They not only had the Merricks to bother them, but now there was this governess as well. His sister was delicate and could not go to school, and he knew it was necessary to get some one to help her with her studies, but this idea of having a school "marm" round the house all the time, listening to conversations, prying into everybody's business, was distasteful to say the least. If she were only good-looking, he thought; but trust his mother for that. As in the case of most governesses selected for homes where there are grownup sons, his mother had probably picked out the homeliest girl she could find.

Answering his query, Larry said:

- "Miss Grace went boating with the governess, sorr."
- "The governess again?" ejaculated Roy, with a smile that he could not suppress.
- "Yes, sorr," repeated Larry, not heeding the interruption. "Miss Grace went rowing with the governess. They are somewhere on Wexford Lake. They took the small boat out. I cautioned them to be careful. Miss Vincent can swim, and I guess they'll be all right."

"Hark! What's that?" interrupted Roy, his hand instinctively clutching the brake.

From the depths of the woods to the right of them came a girl's scream, and then another. It was some distance away, yet distinct enough. Some one was in trouble. Roy turned pale. He thought he recognized the voice. Anxiously he turned to Larry.

"Where did you say my sister went?"

"On Wexford Lake, with the governess. That's hereabouts," he added, pointing ahead.

As he spoke, another shriek, louder and more distressing than the first, broke upon their ears. No further doubt was possible. His sister and her companion were in serious trouble of some sort.

"It's they, Larry, sure as thunder! I recognize Grace's voice. Quick! There is not a moment to be lost!"

Feverishly Roy pushed the throttle lever over to the extreme notch, and the car fairly flew, both men bending eagerly forward trying to catch the exact location of the screams.

"If they're on the lake, sorr, it's over yonder at the bend," shouted Larry, pointing a mile farther up the road.

"All right. We'll stop there. You'll stand by the machine, while I go and investigate."

In another couple of minutes they had pulled up by the side of the ditch, and Roy, jumping from the machine, vaulted over the hedge and disappeared among the trees. He ran rapidly for some distance, forcing his way as best he could through the tangled branches. Then he stopped, puzzled by the unfamiliar paths, uncertain in which direction to proceed. sounds of the highway behind him gradually ceased and died away. An almost oppressive silence fell from the treetops. He hoped that there would be another scream. There was. It was distressing, but it told him where to run, and he set off again, making as quick progress as was possible through the treacherous undergrowth. He stumbled a dozen times, but he scrambled to his feet again and ran on, spurred to his fastest by more shrieks. There was no doubt possible now—it was his little sister Grace. If anything happened to her how could he go home with the news? It would kill his mother. He pushed on in feverish haste, over the enormous roots of great gnarled trees, climbing precipitous knolls, until suddenly he emerged into the open, where a broad expanse of shimmering water lay before him.

At first Roy could see nothing. The strong light reflected from a clear liquid sky was blinding after the semi-obscurity of the woods. But by shading his eyes he made out something white floating on the water, and near it was an upturned boat, drifting. He did not need to be told any more. It was his sister. He could see her plainly now. She was

clinging to the boat, and on the other side was another person, he did not know—the governess, of course. He ran down the bank to the edge of the water, shouting and gesticulating as he went. The two girls saw him coming, and shouted back a feeble reply—a glad shout that sounded like a grateful prayer to Heaven.

Roy was a powerful and expert swimmer, and such a rescue as this was the merest child's play to him, even if he had to bring them both in at the same time. As they were supported by the boat, there was no immediate danger unless they should become exhausted and this was his chief anxiety as far as his sister was concerned. Throwing off his coat and stripping to his undershirt, he took a running plunge from a dock, and went out towards them through the water with a rapid overhand stroke that would have elicited a cheer from a professional. But there was no one there to admire his skill—only two very scared and exhausted young women, whose one thought was to be saved from a watery grave.

The two girls watched him coming with the same feelings that a prisoner condemned to die might watch from the scaffold the coming of a horseman carrying a reprieve. Grace was in all but a fainting condition, and could not have held out much longer. The governess, too, had all she could do to keep up.

"Thank Heaven!" she cried, on hearing the shout

of encouragement from the shore and seeing a man jump into the lake. "Some one has seen us. He's swimming out!"

"It's Roy," murmured Grace weakly.

In a few strokes the rescuer was up to them. He threw his arm around Grace, who, directly she felt herself safe, collapsed entirely and hung limp in her brother's grasp.

"She's fainted," he shouted to her companion. Then he added, "I'll take her in. Can you hold on till I get back?"

The girl nodded.

"Yes—yes," she answered quickly. "Take her to shore! Poor child! She's frightened to death. Never mind about me. I can wait."

The young man took his sister's inanimate form in his strong arms, laid her flat on her back with her head well out of the water, and, floating her in front of him, struck out for the shore. Arrived there, he laid Grace down on the grass, not stopping to revive her while another rescue was to be made, hurried back to the water and swam out again to the boat.

When he reached the governess he was about to take her in the same manner that he had his sister. But she said it was not necessary.

"I can swim in," she said. "It was my long skirt that bothered me. If you will swim with me, and help me if I need it, I think I can reach the shore."

She spoke in a quiet, dignified tone, and with as much calmness and self-possession as if she were asking him to escort her across a ball-room. Only a slight tremor in her voice betrayed the mental and physical strain she had been under. His interest was aroused, and he glanced at her curiously. He saw nothing but a head bobbing up and down in the water, covered with wet hair which hung all over her face like dank seaweed. Decidedly, he thought, she was not a beauty. His mother, as usual, had chosen judiciously.

"All right," he said. "Come along."

She let go her hold of the boat, which they allowed to drift, and then both started swimming to the bank, he affording her as they went along such support as she appeared to need. Their progress was necessarily slow, but they finally reached their destination, and when at last she staggered up the muddy incline in her soggy clothes she was panting, and so weak from exhaustion that she would have fallen had he not held her.

"Excuse me," she murmured, as if ashamed of her weakness. "It is the reaction. I was not afraid, but I was anxious for Grace."

"How did it happen?" he demanded, stooping over the still unconscious form of his sister.

"We were changing places in the boat," she an-

swered simply. "Grace overbalanced herself. She fell against the side and the boat turned turtle."

Seizing Grace's hands, she began to slap them vigorously, while Roy, who had some matches in his coat pocket, lit a twig and put the smoke to the young girl's nostrils. The simple remedy was effective. Grace sneezed, and in a few minutes opened her eyes. Roy, meanwhile, was shouting with stentorian lungs for Larry, who presently appeared at a run.

"Quick, Larry," said his master. "We must get them home as fast as we can, or they will catch their death of cold. You help Miss——" He hesitated, not knowing her name.

"Vincent is my name—Eunice Vincent," said the dripping young woman. Then she added, "You are Mr. Roy Marshall?"

He bowed and smiled. This unconventional introduction struck him as distinctively humorous, presenting as they both did the appearance of drowned rats. Their eyes met, and she smiled also. He noticed that she had large gray eyes, kind and gentle in expression, thoughtful and intellectual-looking. A typical school "marm," he thought to himself. Her hair was all dishevelled and hanging, dripping down her back, the water forming little puddles at her feet. Embarrassed by his scrutiny, she gathered up her demoralized tresses and tried to make herself more presentable, but the effort was in vain. Water was

running off every part of her. Her waist and skirt, soaked through, clung tightly to her, outlining every curve of her slender girlish figure. She looked a fright, and now she was beginning to shiver. He noticed it, and motioned to Larry to give her his coat. His own was already serving to keep Grace warm.

"Come!" he cried. "Let's hurry to the house as fast as possible."

Picking up Grace—a slight burden for his muscular arms—Roy led the way rapidly over the grasses and stones, in and out the trees, back to the place on the highway where they had left the automobile standing, while Miss Vincent followed more slowly, assisted by Larry over the difficult places. It took them nearly ten minutes to reach the road, but once there, both girls were made comfortable in the tonneau, and a moment later the machine started at full speed for Alton Court.

CHAPTER II

A LTON COURT, a fine example of colonial architecture and one of the most imposing residences in that part of New England, had been the home of the Marshalls for four generations. It was built by the present occupant's great-grandfather, a merchant prince of his day, shortly after humiliated England and the high-spirited colonists had decided to make peace, and in those dark, uncertain days of our history, when the nation was still in its cradle and the genus millionaire as yet unknown, a mansion of such consequence was uncommon enough to give its owners no inconsiderable prestige in the community.

Situated about fifteen miles southwest of Boston, it stood, a conspicuous landmark in the midst of some forty acres of ornamental grounds, enclosed by a stone fence covered with moss and lichen and guarded by a porter's lodge. The house itself was built of Quincy granite, and its most striking feature was the spacious entrance, with its noble columns, at the top of the broad flight of steps, flanked on either side by small firs in decorative urns, while in the centre of the broad lateral terrace, which dominated

a wide sweep of thickly timbered park, a graceful fountain danced and splashed without interruption. house had quaint dormer windows that never failed to arouse the enthusiasm of the antiquarian, and running the entire length of the façade was a roomy balcony, from which, in days gone by, many a stirring appeal to patriotism had been made. The outer walls were mostly covered with clinging ivy, and here and there the stone was crumbling and presenting other symptoms of decay, but otherwise the venerable mansion was in an excellent state of preservation. a noble panelled hall gave access to a monumental staircase, adorned on either side with ancestral portraits and classic statuary, while on the first floor to the front of the house and overlooking the park were the two state apartments, which from time immemorial had been reserved for guests of more than ordinary distinction. George Washington himself spent a night in the tapestry chamber during his tour of New England in the fall of 1789, and Dickens was also entertained at Alton Charles Court during the famous novelist's first American tour. From a window on the upper stories could be seen the old cemetery at Roxbury where are interred the bones of John Eliot, the apostle to the redskin.

The Marshall family was one of the oldest and most influential in the country. For over two hundred and fifty years it had been prominently connected

with the political, commercial and social history of Massachusetts. Of English origin, the first American ancestor, if not actually a passenger on the historic "Mayflower," came out to New England a few years later and took an active part in establishing the Plymouth colony. This forbear traced his tree back to the Conquest, when one Charles Maréchale crossed the Straits of Dover in the train of William of Normandy. As with most of the Conqueror's followers, England became his adopted country and in the course of time the name was anglicized. Marshalls for the next five hundred years had varying fortunes, and, a marked family trait being a strong love of personal liberty, it is not surprising to find them often involved in difficulties with the established Thus, during the prosecutions of the authorities. Puritans by James I. we learn that one James Marshall was placed in the stocks in London for having criticised publicly the religious rigors of the day. This was the ancestor who came to America. denounced English tyranny and intolerance, sold his property and became a leader among the fugitive Puritans. He helped them in their plight in Holland and was instrumental in fitting out the "Speedwell" and the "Mayflower," two pygmy vessels, from the loins of whose passengers was destined to issue a nation of giants.

The Marshalls figured conspicuously all through

the early struggles of the colony, and when a hundred years later Massachusetts rose in her wrath to resist by force of arms the greed of the mother country, a Marshall was among the first to shoulder a musket. The family contributed two lives to the Revolutionary War, and the prowess of its fighting men was made the subject of special mention in Congress. In the Civil War, nearly seventy years later, they were again to the front, Captain Robert Marshall being among the first officers killed at the battle of Gettysburg. In more recent times the family had enjoyed civic honors. Twice a Marshall had been mayor of Boston and once Governor of the State. But it was in commerce that they had made their money, and the present head of the house, Robert Agard Marshall, was the founder of one of the most important drug concerns in the country.

He it was who was sitting on the terrace of Alton Court sipping his coffee early one afternoon about three weeks after the events related in the last chapter. He was a fine old gentleman, close on seventy years of age, and with a leonine head still thickly covered with snow-white hair. The gentleman with him was Mr. Merrick, his friend and neighbor.

Steve Merrick was a rough diamond who had started life as a grocery errand-boy. Naturally smart and saving, he advanced step by step until, on the outbreak of the Civil War, he was awarded a bid as

army contractor. Like most of those gentry who poisoned the patriots to fill their own pockets, he made a lot of money, and with sundry lucky real estate speculations soon found himself a rich man. He became acquainted with Mr. Marshall when the latter was running for the Boston mayoralty. In fact, it was Merrick's liberality in contributing to the campaign expenses that had ensured the success of the election. Ever since that time the two men had been intimate, and Mrs. Merrick, a vulgar, obstreperous woman, had not been slow to profit by the opportunity their acquaintance with the Marshalls afforded to break into society.

Mrs. Marshall, an aristocratic old lady, had little in common with her parvenu neighbors; but for the sake of her husband, who was under obligations to Steve Merrick, she tolerated them and allowed Mrs. Merrick to use her as an entering wedge. Once introduced, the Merricks' money did the rest. built a showy place next to Alton Court, and by giving costly entertainments that were talked about they found no difficulty in creating a large circle of so-called friends. Those who ate their dinners laughed behind their backs. No amount of money could conceal the fact that Mrs. Merrick was a vulgarian, and like most parvenues she did not know how to spend discreetly the money that had come to them so rapidly. She overdressed, overfed, overdid everything. She never tired of telling her friends what their house cost and the fabulous price that had been paid for every object in it. She used a tooth-pick at table, laughed coarsely and bullied her servants. It was a bitter pill for Mrs. Marshall to be compelled to patronize a woman whose every action and word jarred her, but there were reasons of policy the world knew nothing about, and these same reasons were compelling when, later on, her husband showed her that the success of her son's future lay in his marriage with Mrs. Merrick's daughter.

Lucy Merrick was a tall willowy blonde of twenty-Like her mother, she got her gowns from Paris and her manners from Oshkosh. Yet apart from her love of slang and her flashy style, she was a good-natured enough girl, and being sole heiress to a million of dollars, was considered a desirable catch by every match-making mother throughout the State. For a man who was not over-fastidious in choosing his life partner, provided she could look after his creature comforts, bear him children and-bring him money, Miss Merrick was perhaps all that could be desired, but if needed to be the helpmate and companion of an intellectual man, she would fall short of filling the requirements. She was empty-headed as a sawdust doll and she had not an interest in life above the trivialities of society. Her idea of being agreeable was to be loquacious and noisy, and in her

senseless spasms of chatter she listened to no one, talking all the time herself about nothing at all. Her one thought and aim was to have fine clothes, plenty of spending money and what she called "a good time." She dressed richly and loudly, and having a rather stylish figure enjoyed a reputation for good looks which really she did not possess. Her complexion was spoiled from late hours and over-indulgence in rich foods, and spiteful tongues insinuated that she used cosmetics and dyed her hair the beautiful blond which it was.

As far as her stunted brain permitted her to, she realized the social advantages that would accrue to her from her marriage with Roy Marshall, but as to feeling any real affection or even regard for him she was utterly incapable. Her affections were still virginal. As a matter of fact, she did not care for Roy nearly as much as she did for Violet, her queer-looking Japanese terrier, which was her almost constant companion. But, on general principles, she was not opposed to getting married. very novelty of the thing appealed to her. thought it would be real nice to have an establishment of her own and take her place in society as a fashionable young matron. She had consented to marry Roy, as her mother had convinced her that it would be a clever move in social strategy. She would have to marry some one. Why not Roy Marshall?

As far as social position went, Roy was more acceptable than any other man she knew. On the other hand, she was not quite so dull as not to understand that her money was buying her a husband in the same way that it had purchased for her parents recognition by Boston's Four Hundred, and the knowledge of this matrimonial "deal" gave her a sense of superiority and independence that showed itself in her haughtiness of manner both towards her future parents-in-law and even towards Roy himself.

Mrs. Marshall, being a sensible woman, deplored the ill-sorted match. Her mother's instinct told her that Miss Merrick was not the girl to make her son the right kind of wife, and she had done her best to discourage it. But when she had raised objections to a plan so dear to her husband's interests, she had provoked such a scene that she had not dared to interfere again. "Leave this matter to me," the old gentleman had said, and accustomed to acquiesce weakly in her lord's wishes, she had merely sighed and obeyed.

Having enjoyed the Marshalls' ample hospitality at luncheon, Steve Merrick sat back in his chair, caressing his paunch, satisfied with himself and the world. The day was warm and the ex-army contractor and Mr. Marshall, senior, enjoyed taking their demi-tasse in the comparative coolness of the shaded terrace. After a long silence, during which he amused

himself puffing thin clouds of blue smoke from his expensive Havana, Merrick suddenly turned on his host. He spoke with a drawl and a nasal twang like a Yankee farmer.

"I'll be derned, Marshall, if I kin git through my head why yer so keen on quittin' that bizness of yourn in Boston. Yer still hale and hearty—fit as a fiddle. Why, man alive, yer're good fer another ten years. That concern of yourn in Boston needs the old pilot. Yer son'll bring new ideas, new energy, that's as it may be. But it's experience that counts every time."

Mr. Marshall shook his head.

"No," he replied, "I am tired of the continual grind. I have carried the burden of anxiety and responsibility for nearly thirty years. It is time others did their share. I don't suppose I've many years left. I want to spend in peace the few days that remain."

Merrick grinned.

"Accordin' to that fool doctor as has been advertisin' hisself in the papers," he said, "you and me's been dead these five and twenty years—chloroformed out of the way. We're putty healthy-looking corpses, ain't we?" he added with a chuckle.

"Oh, Dr. Osler was right in a way," rejoined Mr. Marshall. "It is true—there is no room in the furious maelstrom of our modern business life for old fellows such as you and me. America is the country for young men—fresh energy, fresh brains, fresh

ideas. In every branch of public life you find young men holding important positions—young presidents in the White House, young judges on the bench, young managers at the head of great corporations, young leaders in politics. Practically all we old codgers are already on the shelf; younger men have taken our places at the throttle. I've been longer in harness than the average. But I'm glad I'm through. What with trade competition, flurries in the stock and produce markets, business activities and worries of all kinds, the pace to-day is terrific. It takes the constitution of a horse to stand the strain. I confess I'm quite worn out. That's why I'm impatient to relinquish the reins to my son."

"That drug concarn of yourn is in putty good shape, ain't it?" inquired Merrick, giving his host a keen glance from under his shaggy eyebrows. "It ain't talked about so much as it used to be."

"It was never more prosperous!" replied Mr. Marshall hastily. "Last year we nearly doubled our turnover, and when Roy takes hold, with the new capital which his marriage with your daughter will enable him to put into the concern, Marshall & Company ought to be in a position to control the drug market."

"Wal, to tell yer the honest truth," drawled Mr. Merrick grimly, "I'd kinder like to see something doin' appertainin' to thet marriage. I don't see yer boy 'round my gal much. If they're goin' to get

spliced there ought to be somethin' doin' by this time. Your lad's been home three weeks now. Ef he don't want Lucy, all right! I guess she can find other young fellers as do. We like yer family an' all that sort of thing an' I'm ready to stan' by my bargain—\$200,000 down on their weddin' day, but we ain't doin' any coaxin'."

"Oh, I assure you," replied Marshall, Sr., rather taken aback, "Roy is quite infatuated with Lucy. He's a peculiar boy, not very demonstrative. I suppose he's bashful. You know how it is."

"No, I can't say as I do," rejoined Merrick laconically. "When I popped the question to the missus—my wife that is—I says: 'Maria, you're all right. That pork and beans to-day was A number one. I kinder guess we'd pull together alright, alright. What do you say if we hitch up?' And she says, quite natural and easy, she says: 'All right, Steve—now you're talkin'.' There was no frills—plain bizness. Yer boy's dead slow. It's up to him."

"Certainly—certainly," said Mr. Marshall, embarrassed how to explain satisfactorily Roy's apparent indifference. "I'll speak to him."

"Maybe your eyes ain't so good as mine," said Merrick significantly, "or maybe my eyes sees things they don't oughter."

"What do you mean?" demanded Mr. Marshall.

"Wal," said Merrick, "I've noticed Master Roy

dangling after thet schoolmarm more than's actually called for by the regulations. I ran into them in the park yesterday. They were chinning away like a couple of magpies and so taken up with each other that they didn't see me. I ain't sayin' nothin', only it ain't exactly the square thing to my Lucy—understand?"

Mr. Marshall turned pale. Was it possible that Roy, always so indifferent to the opposite sex, had been attracted to his sister's governess? That unfortunate episode on the lake had, of course, led to a certain intimacy, but that it could be anything more serious than a harmless flirtation he did not believe for a moment. In any case, Roy had no right to trifle with the girl, especially when it might imperil his future plans by arousing the anger of the Merricks. Certainly he would lose no time in talking to him on the subject.

His reflections and those of Mr. Merrick were suddenly interrupted by loud shouts of laughter. Both men looked down and saw Grace, tennis racket in hand, being pursued by Roy on the lawn below. They had been playing and suddenly Grace, in a spirit of fun, had run off with the ball and he had given chase. The young girl was devotedly attached to Roy, openly preferring his society and companionship to that of her younger brother Ned, whose age she more nearly approached. When Roy was home Ned stood little

chance, and fully aware of this favoritism, he was now sulkily sprawled on a bench under a tree, reading a book, while his sister romped with Roy.

Grace was the typical young American girl-attractive, bright, agreeable, charming, less awkward because less restrained than European girls of the same age and class, and with the irresistible fascination and freshness of youth unspoiled by freedom of speech and action. She was aristocratic in appearance, lithe and graceful in bearing, easy and frank in manners and conversation. Her figure was slight and as yet unformed, but her regular features, fine eyes and luxuriant hair, which she wore straight down her back tied with a ribbon, gave promise of uncommon beauty. Not yet sixteen, she had reached that critical age in a girl's life when, like the rosebud which slowly opens disclosing its loveliest leaves, the child is merged into the woman. Her natural amiability and sweetness of disposition had earned for her the sobriquet of "Sunbeam" from her family and friends.

She was as fleet on her feet as a forest nymph and she ran Roy a hard race in and out among the trees before he finally caught her and gently but firmly compelled her to surrender the ball. She was laughing so heartily that she had not the strength to resist further.

"It's very mean of you to take advantage of a poor weak girl!" she pouted. "I'll tell Miss Vincent!"

She broke from his grasp and ran to meet her governess who was approaching, accompanied by Miss Merrick. Some distance away seated under a clump of fine oaks, were Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Merrick.

Lucy Merrick, in spite of the heat, was costumed as elaborately as though she were going to some important social function. But she was not. She always got herself up in this extravagant fashion, no matter what the occasion. Dress to her was the one thing in life that was really worth while. It was the Alpha and Omega of all things. She had on a gown of white embroidered chiffon over rose colored silk made in the latest style and with rose colored shoes and stockings to match, while her hair was built up so fantastically with puffs and combs that she looked as if a head just taken from a coiffeur's window had been fastened on her shoulders. A diamond dog collar necklace encircled her throat, and enormous pearls did service as ear rings, while the fingers of each hand literally blazed with gems. In vulgar parlance, Miss Lucy "had 'em all on."

She had a box of candy in her hand and was amusing herself throwing chocolate creams to Violet, her Japanese terrier, who caught them in her mouth. When the little beast, aided by her mistress, had swallowed about half the box, Miss Lucy decided her pet had had enough, so she picked her up regardless of her dress, and putting her close to her face, allowed her to run her cold nose and warm tongue all over it.

"Isn't she a precious?" she cried, appealing to Roy and caressing her pet, which, with its body entirely bald, deep purple in color, small pointed ears and snout, and a few straggling hairs bristling on the top of its head, had the appearance of an overgrown rat. It was always shivering, as if afflicted with the ague, and whining to be carried.

She lavished upon this four-footed animal the affection she was incapable of bestowing upon her own kind, looking after her canine wants, nursing her canine distempers with the solicitude of a mother. If anything ailed her, an overloaded stomach or an outraged digestion, Lucy was in the keenest distress. The only time she was known to shed a tear was when one day a wagon wheel went over Violet's tail and she ran howling to the house. The dog had a wardrobe which many a human might envy. She had coats and trousers for summer and winter wear in all colors and cuts, little pocket handkerchiefs marked with her initial, with which Lucy carefully wiped the sleepers out of her eyes, and shoes of all shapes and shades, tan for the daytime, patent leather for evening wear. She slept in her young mistress's room in a miniature brass bedstead which had lace pillows and real linen sheets. She was stuffed from morning till night with candy and consequently was always sick. spoiled and overindulged child, the little beast showed affection for nobody, snarled at everyone and with the servants was almost as unpopular as Miss Lucy herself. One maid gave immediate notice because Lucy had requested her to rub Violet's feet warm after she had been carelessly running about in the snow without her galoches.

Roy stood looking from the dog to her mistress, taking mental stock of his bride that was to be. The dog certainly he would not stand for. An expression suggestive of disgust and impatience hovered at the corners of his clean shaven mouth. From Lucy his glance went to Miss Vincent, who had thrown her arm around Grace in an affectionate caress.

The governess looked an entirely different person to-day to the dripping half-drowned young woman whom he had dragged out of Wexford Lake. She had on a simply made gown of gray material, the general plainness relieved at the neck and wrists by white lace. Her hair, naturally silky and of remarkable length, was caught up loosely. She had been reading and carried a book in her disengaged hand.

"How different!" Roy murmured to himself, not heeding Lucy's question. Stamping her foot impatiently, she repeated it.

"Roy, I do wish you wouldn't dream so. I declare one can't get a civil answer out of you since you've come home this time. Don't you think my dog a perfect little beauty?" "I think she's a horrid little beast," said Roy impatiently, "and I don't see how anybody with the slightest self-respect can let a dog kiss her face like that. It isn't exactly encouraging to those who might want to follow her example," he added ironically.

But the irony was completely lost on Lucy, who merely saw in his speech a deliberate, uncalled for insult to her canine companion.

"Roy," she said indignantly, "I think you are very unkind. I won't speak to you for the rest of the afternoon." Turning to Grace and Miss Vincent she cried: "Come, girls, we'll have a game of tennis. Go and ask Ned to play."

"Won't you come, Roy?" asked Grace.

"No, dear, I'll go up on the terrace and smoke a cigarette with Mr. Merrick and father. Besides," he added aside, indicating Lucy by a jerk of his head, "her ladvship is offended."

Grace gave a merry peal of laughter and ran off followed by Lucy and Miss Vincent. Ned, disturbed from his slumbers, went after them, grumbling.

Roy, during his passage at arms with Lucy, had tried to catch Miss Vincent's eye, but the governess studiously avoided his gaze, and as far as might be inferred from appearances, was even unconscious of his presence. Once or twice, Lucy had given both of them a sharp look, but there was absolutely nothing

in the demeanor of the governess to arouse her suspicions, even if she had any.

Roy went up the steps giving access to the terrace and drew a chair up to the table at which his father and prospective father-in-law were sitting.

"Having your demi-tasse out here, eh?" he said, "good idea. Do you mind if I smoke a cigarette?" he asked, addressing his father.

"Certainly not, my boy. Smoke away—why should I care if you like to poison yourself with nicotine?"

Marshall Sr. spoke in a jocular tone, but really in earnest. The old gentleman was not a smoker himself and had little patience with those who used the weed. Yet it was not so much his son's solitary cigarette that he had in mind as Merrick's unlimited cigars. The ex-army contractor was an inveterate smoker.

"Oh come, pater," laughed Roy as he lit a cigarette, "it isn't so bad as all that. Think of the great men who smoked incessantly—Bismarck, Grant, Carlyle, Balzac, Tennyson, Hugo. They lived long and did things. Tobacco soothes the nerves and helps one to think."

"Pshaw!" retorted his father; "my nerves are steady as a rock and I never touched tobacco since I was a boy when I foolishly essayed a big cigar. It made me deathly sick but I was cured for life. The

man whose brain won't work without being artificially stimulated is deficient in gray matter. The trouble with the smoker is that he is such a selfish brute. He is the original human hog. Is he justified in puffing what is usually a bad cigar into the faces of persons to whom tobacco smoke is objectionable? The man who will smoke on a public street car, knowing that his cigar is annoying the man or woman behind him, is a public nuisance."

"Fiddlesticks!" grunted Merrick, who had listened to the conversation without interfering, "a quiet smoke is about the only cheap and real pleasure a man has left in life. Take away from the workin' man his plug of 'baccy and from the millionaire his perfecto and the world would come to a standstill. Life wouldn't be worth livin' if we had to stop and consider the likes and dislikes of every crank. give and take in this world-mostly take. That reminds me," he went on, "of an old lady I knew in Virginny. She invited a sea capt'n to dinner. had a horror of tobacco in any form and he was specially fond of a villainous pipe. When the coffee was served he produced it. She glared at him but he took no notice and went on tranquilly filling the pipe. Then, suddenly, as if bethinkin' himself of his manners, he asked: 'Do you object to smoking ma'am?' 'Yes,' answered the old lady emphatically, 'I do most decidedly!' 'Queer, ain't it?' he replied

unruffled, 'some folks do,' and he struck a match and lit his pipe.'"

"He was a genuine hog," laughed Roy.

Mr. Merrick rose from his seat with a noisy yawn.

"I guess I'd better stretch my legs," he said, "they're kinder stiff from sittin' so long. I'll walk a bit, then I reckon I'll go into the house and take a snooze."

"Capital idea!" exclaimed his host, glad to get rid of him, "I'll join you presently. I'll just sit here a little longer."

The contractor went off leaving father and son together.

Marshall Sr. was not sorry of this opportunity to have a serious talk with Roy on the subject of Lucy. Pointing to Merrick's retreating figure he said significantly:

"That man's friendship means a great deal to you, Roy. Be careful you do nothing to jeopardize it."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I refer to his daughter," replied Mr. Marshall, lowering his voice to a dramatic undertone. "You have been home three weeks but as far as I know this marriage on which we are building all our hopes is as far off as ever. Merrick says you are neglecting Lucy. He intimates that if you don't want to marry her she won't have to look long elsewhere. Do you realize," he added slowly and fixing his son with a

keen glance, "what a disaster it would mean for all of us if you did not marry Lucy Merrick?"

A cloud passed over the young man's face. He moved uneasily on his seat and coughed nervously. His eyes wandered from his father's face to the tennis players on the lawn. Grace and Lucy Merrick were matched against his brother Ned and Miss Vincent, and the moving figures of the girls gave the animation of life to the vivid green background of the park.

Receiving no answer to his question, Mr. Marshall continued:

"In a few more weeks the summer will be over and you will enter Marshall & Company as junior partner. It will take you a year to get the run of things, but at the end of that time you ought to be competent to succeed me as head of the firm. That is your wish, your ambition, is it not?"

"Yes, indeed it is; I can't wait for the day when I'll start in," replied Roy, bending eagerly forward, his face flushed.

"I'm glad to know it," said his father, noting with satisfaction his son's enthusiasm. "With brains, energy and new capital you ought to be able to restore to the business the prestige it has lost in the commercial world."

"I will, sir, I will," cried Roy enthusiastically. "I'll never rest until the firm is twice as big as it is to-day."

"The first thing necessary for success is new cap-

ital," went on his father. "I have already acquainted you with our financial condition. At the present moment the situation is extremely critical. Unless new capital is put into the business, we might as well close down. For a quarter of a century Marshall & Company stood at the head of the drug trade. It never had a serious rival. But of late years business conditions have changed. Younger men disposing of unlimited capital have inaugurated a warfare of ruinous competition. Old, conservative methods could not prevail against a new and more sensational way of doing business. The radical changes involved advertising on a gigantic scale, and for lack of working capital we have steadily lost ground. Your wife----"

The old gentleman paused and looked at his son, whose eyes were still gazing in the direction of the tennis players. Roy winced but Mr. Marshall did not notice it.

"Your wife," continued his father, "will bring you \$200,000 on your wedding day. This money you can at once put into the business. With that and what you will get at her father's death, you will one day be a very rich man. Use this wealth, my boy, to do big things in the world—make Marshall & Company the biggest commercial fact in the country. I need hardly say," he added, "that you have pleased me by entering so readily into my wishes for your future,

particularly in regard to your marriage. Young men are often obstinate in these matters. They are apt to think they know better than their parents. You have been sensible. You will not regret it."

The old gentleman ceased talking and looked at his son as if expecting some response. None came. father's praise did not affect Roy in the way it might have been expected to do. He was surprised himself at his own indifference. Three weeks ago every word his father had uttered would have given him the keenest pleasure. He had asked for nothing better, he had dreamed of no other future than that his father had planned for him. A prosperous business for his inheritance, an heiress for his wife-what more could any man aspire to? But what may not happen in three weeks? Men may be born and die again, dynasties may rise and be overthrown. Like a blind man who suddenly recovers his vision after groping for years amid darkness, Roy now looked out upon a different world. A new interest had come into his life!

CHAPTER III

THERE was tremendous excitement at Alton Court that afternoon of the mishap on the lake when the automobile dashed up at full speed with the two half-drowned young women Mrs. Marshall was on the terrace eagerly watching for her son's arrival, and with her were Mrs. Merrick and Lucy, both of whom were also eager to greet the young man, but from motives less This homecoming of the elder son was of unselfish. considerable importance to the Merrick social interests, for it meant a speedy announcement of Lucy's engagement with consequent increase in their local prestige. Mrs. Merrick did not attempt to conceal her gratification at the coming marriage, which capped the height of her social ambitions, and was, in fact, the fruit of her own skilful manœuvring. mother-in-law of Roy Marshall, the future owner of Alton Court, she would be a personage of importance whom none could afford to snub. As to Lucy, she was languidly indifferent to the arrival of her future She had paid him the compliment, however, of donning a sumptuous new dress, the richness of which was, as usual, quite out of proportion with

the importance of the occasion, and Violet was decorated with a ribbon bow larger than herself of the same color as her mistress' robe.

So the three women waited with emotions entirely different—the mother with the unselfish joy which since humanity first appeared has filled the maternal breast, the Merricks with the critical interest they might show in the acquisition of a new horse. At last the automobile appeared in the distance, a mere black spot on the long stretch of white road, and they hastened down the road to meet it. But when a few minutes later the machine drew up and it was seen what a condition its occupants were in, there was general commotion. Everybody talked at once while Roy endeavored to give a coherent account of the accident. Mrs. Marshall, indifferent to the fact that she was ruining her point lace waist, hysterically clasped her soaked daughter to her bosom, while Roy laughed and joked with Lucy, who teased him about the rescue.

"Quite a romance!" she said sarcastically with a toss of her head.

Mrs. Merrick eyed severely the shivering Miss Vincent and started to lecture the governess on the unpardonable rashness of two unprotected females venturing on the water in a cockleshell boat.

Miss Vincent made no reply, but covering herself as well as she could with a rug fled to the house after Grace and Mrs. Marshall. Roy, who had overheard, protested, contradicting Mrs. Merrick flatly, even rudely:

"The accident could have happened to anyone," he said warmly. "In any case it was not Miss Vincent's fault but Grace's. She tipped the boat over while changing places. Miss Vincent," he added, "has displayed a coolness and bravery that was quite remarkable."

He was so positive about it, so warm in his praise that Lucy glanced at her mother and elevated her eyebrows as if in pained surprise. Keen as all matchmaking mothers are to scent peril ahead, Mrs. Merrick at once saw the necessity of plainly marking for Roy's benefit Miss Vincent's subordinate position in the Marshall household, so she said pointedly:

"It was certainly only right to swim back for the governess"—she lingered over the title—"as if you had not trouble enough with your sister on your hands. Of course," she added as if it were something she regretted, "it is a duty to save a human life, even if it be only that of a subordinate."

Happily there were no bad results. Neither Grace nor Miss Vincent was any the worse for their ducking and in a few days the incident was forgotten. Grace resumed her studies and walks with Miss Vincent, while Roy spent his time playing golf or tennis with his brother Ned or discussing future business

plans with his father. Sometimes, when he could not very well get out of it, he took Lucy for a spin in the automobile, Larry going along as assistant chauffeur, but she fatigued him so with her senseless chatter and artificial manner that for the first time he fully realized that she bored him. Yet this woman was to be his life-long companion. The idea was obnoxious, unbearable. The proposed marriage was preposterous. The more he thought of it, the more moody and silent he grew, while Lucy chatted on entirely oblivious to the fact that he was not paying the slightest attention.

A week had passed since the adventure on the lake and he had not addressed as much as a word to Miss Vincent. He came across her each day in the company of his sister, but a distant bow was the extent of their mutual recognition. He saw she was a lady in every sense of that much abused term, and she was not as homely as he had thought at first. But it was indifferent to him what she was. He had not the slightest desire to improve the acquaintance. He had no time for women. Miss Merrick and Violet were about as much as he could attend to in the feminine way. When he was not automobiling with Ned or Lucy, or with his mother on the terrace, he was usually to be found indulging his favorite hobby—making new mechanical models in his tool shop.

But one afternoon he happened to come across the

governess in the park. She was sitting on a bench under the shade of a tree reading. He raised his cap and was about to pass when she stopped him:

"Oh, Mr. Marshall," she said, with a flush of embarrassment, "I have had no opportunity to thank you for what you did the other day at the lake. Pardon my stopping you, but it has been on my conscience."

He smiled, showing all his white teeth.

"Nonsense," he replied, "that was nothing. It was mere child's play. Really, I enjoyed it. I wish I had it to do over again. No, I don't mean that exactly——"

He laughed awkwardly and she laughed a little nervous laugh, as if she appreciated the fact that she was only the governess and he her employer's son.

He noticed the flush and interpreting it wrongly, took her for a coquette. But what surprised him and kept him standing there staring at her was her singularly attractive appearance. In the water she had seemed positively ugly, while really, if not exactly beautiful, she was extremely good-looking. Where had his eyes been? Why had he not noticed her before?

Above all, he was attracted by her manner and dress. In her simple light gray gown and white collar and cuffs, set off by a black sailor knot, loosely tied, she looked the picture of refined womanhood.

She was, he judged, about three and twenty. Her figure was slender but well rounded, every line suggesting plenty of exercise and open air. Healthy and wholesome, sound in mind and body, she was one of those young women who seem destined by Nature to be mothers of the race. Her features were irregular but prepossessing, and her high, broad brow, crowned by auburn hair, indicated considerable mentality. It was the head of a woman who, in critical moments, was likely to be swayed by her intellect rather than by her temperament.

But her eyes were the most attractive and expressive part of her physiognomy. What more wonderful, more beautiful, more disturbing than a woman's eyes -the dark, flashing, languorous eyes of the imperious brunette, conscious of their power and willing to exert it: the soft dreamy eyes of the stately blonde, rivalling in their pellucid depths the matchless blue of the vaultless heavens; the cold, thoughtful gray eyes of intellect, grave, uncompromising; the kind, gentle, wistful eyes, the most dangerous of them all? Eunice's eyes were a combination of the two lastintellectual and gently wistful. They were gray in color and shaded with long, dark lashes and somewhat mournful in expression, yet alert and intelligent. She had a firm and rather sensitive mouth, drooping Young as she was, her mouth had at the corners. about it certain lines which suggested that she had

already tasted the bitter fruit of world-sorrow. It was the mouth of one who had suffered.

Her voice was well-poised and musical in quality and her manner had the easy grace that denotes good breeding.

Roy had not been in the habit of paying much attention to the opposite sex, but this girl's personality appealed to him with irresistible force. The contrast between his sister's governess and the woman he was going to marry was so marked that he could not refrain from making mental comparisons not entirely to the advantage of Miss Merrick. He stared at her until, conscious of his fixed scrutiny, a look of annoyance crossed her face. But it was only for an instant. The cloud passed and left her visage as calm and unconcerned as if she were unconscious of his presence.

Roy was shuffling uneasily about, trying to invent some excuse for further conversation. Finally he said:

- "Where is Grace?"
- "She's gone up to the house to get a book."

There was another awkward pause. Then he said boldly:

- "May I sit here till she comes?"
- "Certainly, if you wish."

The smile disappeared from her face and there was a frigid note about her welcome that he did not exactly relish, but he sat down and glanced furtively

at her, at a loss what to say. Miss Vincent herself was ill at ease. She was sorry now that she had spoken to him. Miss Merrick or some one at the house might see him there and put a wrong construction upon it. She felt the false position she was in.

"Do you like it here?" he ventured after a pause. He felt rather intimidated. There was something in her manner, an indefinable charm mixed with hauteur, which attracted and yet kept him at a distance.

"Yes, it is very nice, everyone is most kind," she answered.

Instinctively a gentleman, Roy quickly realized that this girl's dependent position at Alton Court entitled her to even more respect and consideration than he would be expected to show a social equal. once averted his gaze and began to draw idle patterns on the sandy path at his feet. He wondered why he had been so blind. He had been a whole week under the same roof with her and yet he had not remarked before that she was one of the most attractive girls he had ever met. He knew she was a college girl and he felt fraternal sympathy for her. So many girls, he mused, were given the higher education without the means to live up to the ideals and tastes fostered by culture. It was like the punishment of Tantalus, to be taught what is most beautiful and most desirable in life only to be deprived of the means to enjoy them. A man without money can do many things with a university degree; it is useful to him in almost every walk of life, but what can a woman do but teach if suddenly thrown upon her own resources, and what dreadful drudgery teaching is, subject to every insult and humiliation. His sister Grace was a dear little girl, a favorite with everyone, but he himself would never have the patience to teach her.

"You are a Smith girl?" he said suddenly with the idea of getting better acquainted.

"Yes," she replied, "I studied at Smith College."

"Did you graduate?"

She hesitated a moment and then replied:

"No—we had trouble at home. I had to leave college."

"Were you sorry?"

She gave a little gasp as she replied with her whole heart:

"Oh, yes, it was the happiest time in my life."

"Your life is not very old yet," he laughed.

She made no rejoinder, evidently wishing to discourage further personalities, and he continued:

"Yes, it is jolly, isn't it? But I'm glad I'm through with it. I was impatient to begin a career."

The topic was mutually interesting and they got along famously. They forgot all about Grace and Miss Merrick as they chatted on, discussing the merits of their respective alma maters. They compared notes as to classroom routine, he told her stories of

the clever men who carried off honors during the last term, and about the great ball games fought on the field. She, in turn, described the cosey house parties given by the girl undergraduates, the wonderful performances of Shakespeare presented by the dramatic club, and the hundred and one other little interesting incidents of girl university life.

"Teaching is dreadful drudgery," he said; "how can you stand it?"

"We should like what we have to do," she answered gravely. Then she added, "One cannot always choose."

There was a gentle rebuke in her tone and he felt like a school-boy who had been reprimanded for an impertinence. He was angry at her for presuming to preach at him. He half rose to go, but he caught another glimpse of her large gray eyes, serious and melancholy as if they mirrored her soul, and he stayed.

She accidentally dropped the book she had been reading. As he stooped to pick it up, he glanced at the title. It was Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe."

"You are fond of heavy reading," he laughed.

"I don't call that heavy," she answered. "It is so fascinating, so wonderful. Can you ever tire of speculating on man's origin and his ultimate destiny? Doesn't the subject interest you?"

Her eyes met his frankly and serenely. She had got over her first moments of embarrassment and she

conversed as easily and freely with him as if they were old friends.

- "I'm afraid it doesn't," replied Roy. "The fact is I never gave it much thought."
 - "What does interest you?" she inquired.
- "Oh," he replied carelessly, "the more practical things of every-day life—the news of the world, politics, the latest big operations in commercial and financial circles, Arctic explorations, discoveries in science, submarine boats. That's my hobby, you know," he added, smiling, "mechanical inventions."
 - "Yet you are going to be a chemist."
- "One cannot always choose," he said, repeating her own words.

She laughed and he laughed, too. The ice was broken and thereafter they chatted with a sense of greater intimacy. Yet he continued to treat her with the courtesy due a queen. There was something in her manner that exacted it.

- "You are a Boston girl?" he said interrogatively.
- "No," she answered. "I was born in New York. We lived there until disaster came. Then we came to Massachusetts."

She said nothing more and he did not press for further particulars. He had heard the story from his mother. It was one of those sordid, commonplace dramas in real life which are the stock in trade of the yellow newspapers. Her father, Sylvester Vin-

cent, was a stock-broker in Wall Street—energetic, prosperous and devoted to his wife and only daughter. They had an expensive apartment on Central Park West and Eunice was sent to Smith College. Then the fever of Wall Street, which has sent so many victims to early graves, seized Mr. Vincent. Enough did not suffice. He dreamed of great wealth. He began to speculate deeper than his resources warranted. The market went against him, he exhausted his own funds, and still losing tried to stem the tide by using money belonging to other people. There was a scandal and rather than face disgrace he put a bullet through his brain.

Eunice was at college when the tragedy occurred that made her mother a widow. The following term she was to have taken her degree and she had planned after graduation to take up literature as a profession. She was full of these ambitious projects for the future when she was hastily summoned home. That was the last she saw of college. A girl of uncommon intelligence and strength of character, she faced philosophically the new situation her unhappy father had created. Not a word of complaint, not a reproach against the memory of the dead passed her lips. She well knew that henceforth a life of dependent drudgery awaited her, but she made no protest. Not having taken her degree she could not aspire to a lucrative professorship; at best she could secure a position as

assistant teacher in some small school. Their fine apartment and fine clothes all went early in the crash, and their fine weather friends lost no time following Mrs. Vincent, racked with illness and discouraged by misfortune, was incapable of helping herself, so practically all the work of reconstruction fell upon Eunice, who set bravely about the task of making order out of chaos, and from the time they left New York to the day six months later when her mother died in her arms, she was the provider of their resources and the sole manager of their affairs. cares and responsibilities could not fail to leave their impress upon the girl and make her even more serious and thoughtful than she was by nature. Adversity moulded her character and brought to quick maturity the sterling qualities that were in her. After the first violent outburst of grief following her mother's death Eunice turned resolutely to battle with the world. She was alone, without relatives, without friends. The past was a nightmare—the future a blank. taught for a year in a private school—a position little better than that of a domestic servant-and was rescued from this slavery by the kindness of a former pupil who recommended her to Mrs. Marshall, who was then looking for a governess companion for Grace. That was nearly a year ago and she had been at Alton Court ever since.

Roy knew all this in a general way, and he had

for her that keen sympathy which any man of generous impulses feels for a woman exposed to the hard knocks of the world. What a hopeless outlook, he reflected, what a future at the best! Suppose she fell ill. Work would be impossible, her savings would soon be exhausted. Then what would become of her? She could marry, but the man she cared for might not want a girl without money, and she was not the kind to like any man merely because he would support her. He could see by the toss of her head and the flash of her eye that she was proud. He judged her rightly.

This first meeting was not the last. Roy continued to wander in that part of the park more often, and his presence there was so unusual that Grace noticed it. With the precocious instinct of young girls of her age, Grace instantly jumped at the conclusion that her governess was the attraction. Instead of being shocked at the idea, she was overjoyed. Firstly, it was so romantic, quite after the manner of novels she had read where the governess invariably married the heir to the title; secondly, she hated Lucy Merrick and would welcome any new arrangement that would prevent her becoming her sister-in-law. Full of enthusiasm for the idea, she could not resist the temptation to sound Eunice herself on the subject.

"Do you know," she said to her governess, "I don't believe Roy cares two straws for Lucy."

"You mustn't say such things," replied Eunice, shaking her head reprovingly at her ward.

But Grace was in a rebellious mood. With a knowing smile she said:

"I mean just what I say. I don't think he can bear the sight of her. Papa urged it upon him. The poor boy is simply being dragged into it." Then as if moved by a sudden impulse she cried, "Do you know what I would like, Eunice?"

"What, dear?"

"I would like Roy to marry you. Then I'd have you for my sister."

Miss Vincent flushed and then turned pale. She rose hurriedly from her seat and faced Grace.

"Grace," she said severely, "you must never talk like that again. Do you hear—never again!"

She walked away toward the house followed by her contrite and crestfallen pupil.

After Grace's indiscreet speech Eunice studiously avoided Roy. She either pretended to be engrossed in her book when he came up or suddenly remembered it was time for Grace's piano lesson. Roy, not understanding what had happened to check the newly formed friendship, felt hurt and angry, and one day he asked her bluntly:

"Why do you always run away from me?"

She could think of no good reason, so she remained silent.

- "Do I annov you?"
- "Oh, not at all. Only-"

She hesitated, not knowing how to make him understand her position.

"Only nothing!" ejaculated Roy. "You see you can't even find an excuse if you try. Well, I'm not going to let you escape this time. I like talking to you. Surely you can do that much for me after saving you from drowning."

She had to laugh and once more the barrier was overthrown, they were as before. He sat with her the entire afternoon, talking on various topics. He found her well informed on almost every subject. He could give her points on political, scientific and other questions appealing more strongly to the masculine mind, but when it came to literature, art, music or synthetic philosophy, she was more than a match for him. What astonished him was her broad outlook on life. She reasoned like a woman of forty instead of a girl barely out of her teens. He told her of his secret ambition, to accomplish big things, to build up and develop Marshall & Co. until it was the talk of the country. He was delighted to find her responsive and sympathetic, entering understandingly into all his schemes and plans. Hitherto he had known only one kind of girl, the Lucy Merrick class, vain, frivolous, irresponsible, pleasure loving. Such women, he pondered, were the fitting mates for the drones of life, for the butterflies of fashion who can afford the time to give them the round of pleasures they demand. They were not the women who spur men on to the achievement or bear children destined to make the greatness of the nation.

So the days passed. The interviews in the park grew more frequent and they lasted longer. Roy soon noticed that his sister had a strange habit of disappearing. He had no sooner passed a few conventional remarks about the weather than Grace vanished as completely as if the earth had swallowed her, and when she reappeared after the lapse of an hour or so she had a roguish smile on her face that anyone but a blind man would have understood. But it did not occur to him or Eunice that she was doing it as part of a deliberate plan. Her heart was set on her favorite brother marrying the Eunice she had come to love as a sister. She did not see that it was possible, vet she intended to help it along in every way possible. But Roy and Eunice were serenely unconscious of all this, and during her absences chatted as freely as if they had been acquainted for years.

Eunice ceased to feel embarrassment when Roy joined them. She knew he was attached to his sister and saw nothing unusual in his constantly seeking them out. It was strange, she thought, that he was not more in Miss Merrick's society, but she was quite willing to accept Grace's valuation of his real feelings

in that quarter. She rather despised Roy for lending himself to an arrangement of such obvious sordidness. She realized that his father was to blame more than he, and she found many qualities in the young man to admire. He was cleaner in mind and freer than most men of the vices common in young fellows of his age. He did not gamble, he did not drink. His outlook on life was serious and he was filled with a healthy energy and ambition. She saw a brilliant future for a man with his great natural ability and his power of application. He could go far with the right hand to guide him, the right influence to inspire him, but how far and in what direction would such a woman as Lucy Merrick take him?

She found herself thinking what a far more suitable wife she herself would make him. She had never given marriage a thought, she had not considered it within the range of possibilities. Her life, as far as she could see, would have to be spent in lonely solitude. She knew very few people and she had met no men whom she could care for sufficiently to marry. It was more than likely that she would die an old maid. She, of all women intended by Nature to be man's faithful companion and the mother of his children, seemed destined to end her days in sterile celibacy. If the fates had been kinder, if she had been commanded to select a husband and given her choice among the sons of men, Roy Marshall would have ap-

pealed to her. He was manly, of strong character, clever, ambitious, full of energy. He was also gentle and affectionate-she could see that by his manner toward his sister. To travel life's long journey with such a companion—ah, that would be living. could not, of course, help seeing by this time that he found more pleasure in her society than in that of his intended wife, and while it made her heart pulsate faster to think that he liked her, the knowledge of it really only tended to make her unhappy. What was the use? Supposing he loved her and she loved him, they could never be anything to each other. was bound to another woman, if not by actual promise, by the most important business interests. could not afford to upset the plans on which all his hopes centred. She would not permit it. than imperil his future career she would go away. Then at least no one could accuse her of abusing the confidence of the family and using her position to steal the affections of the son.

Still she continued to see Roy every day. Gradually and almost unnoticed by themselves they formed an alliance of friendship, he confiding in her, she in him. He admitted that the proposed marriage was worrying him, that he did not love Lucy Merrick and never could, and that he felt a sense of degradation in permitting himself to be bartered in this fashion. Eunice could say nothing in favor of it, so she was silent.

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THE GAME

Changing the conversation, she told him about her own childhood, their happy years of prosperity and the dreadful tragedy of her father's death. And when they thought they had talked only a few minutes Grace would return and tell them it was two hours.

The recollection of these pleasant hours spent under the trees in the park was in Roy's mind now as he sat there on the terrace facing his father, who awaited his answer. In these three short weeks he seemed to have lived a century. Everything was changed, he had another outlook on the world, a new interest had come into his life—Eunice Vincent. Ah. why not confess to his father now, why not cry it out to the whole world? He loved this woman, penniless as she was. Her one little finger was dearer to him than all the millions Lucy Merrick could bring him. What a cur he was to think that a wife can be bartered for like a common prostitute. Ugh! he hated himself for having lent himself to such infamous trafficking in flesh and honor. If the fortunes of the family were in peril, why should he be made the victim? He harbored deep resentment against his father for having forced the odious marriage upon him and he felt all the worse because he knew how Eunice must despise him. Ah, she was the only woman he could be happy with, she was the one woman in the world to help him on to success. One look from her tranquil, gray eyes and he felt he could go forth to conquer a kingdom. But would she marry

At that instant and while he was still engrossed in his thoughts he saw Miss Vincent jump suddenly to stop a ball. She tripped and fell heavily. The other players ran to her, but for a moment she did not move. Roy started from his seat with the involuntary exclamation:

"She's hurt!" he cried.

His father followed the direction of his son's gaze and saw the cause of his concern. Eunice meantime picked herself up and the game proceeded.

"Oh, Roy, that reminds me," said his father, eying the young man keenly. "I have noticed of late that you are a good deal with Miss Vincent. I suppose it means nothing. She's a nice-looking girl and I know what young men of your age are—I was a good deal of a flirt myself—" he interjected with jocularity. "But don't let Lucy see it, my boy, or there'll be the devil to pay. You're too sensible, I hope, to allow any folly of that kind to imperil your interests, aren't you?"

Roy set his teeth. Hadn't the moment come to throw off the mask and tell his father the truth, confess honestly that he did not love Lucy Merrick and could never marry her, and that Eunice Vincent was the only woman he could marry? He opened his mouth to speak when suddenly there was a commotion

at the foot of the terrace. Grace and her brother Ned raced up, their rackets in hand, followed in more dignified fashion by Lucy and Miss Vincent.

"Hallo!" hailed Roy, glad of the interruption.

"Finished your game already? What's the score?"

"Three to love," cried Ned. "Miss Vincent and I beat Grace and Miss Merrick hollow."

Grace meanwhile had run up to Roy and thrown her arms affectionately round his neck. Placing her mouth close to his ear she whispered:

- "Oh, Roy, I am so wretched. What do you think?"
- "What, child?" he asked, turning to pet her.
- "Eunice has just told me she is going away. She saw mother this morning and said she wished to leave at once. She's going to-morrow."

CHAPTER IV

F his sister had suddenly thrown a bomb at him Roy could not have been more startled than he was at the news that Grace brought. During the past few days there had taken place such a revolutionary change in his ideas, men and things appeared under an aspect so entirely different that he walked about in a daze. He felt as if he were part of a dream. The usual routine of every day was neglected. He trod on air and built castles in Spain. in love, and, as with most lovers, logic never entered with his reasoning. It had never occurred to him that at any moment Eunice might leave Alton Court, either of her own accord or at the request of his mother, alarmed at their growing intimacy. Eunice herself had given no hint of any such intention. The news, therefore, that she was going away immediately came with all the force of an unexpected shock. He experienced the same feeling of utter, blank dismay as if he had just been told that some one very dear to him who had been ill was not expected to recover. the first time he realized how completely Eunice had come into his life, how essential she was to his happiness. He knew now that he loved her.

His first impulse was to rush to her and demand an explanation of this mysterious resignation which, he could not help thinking, was in some way connected with himself. Perhaps his father or the Merricks had noticed the frequency of their conversations in the park, and had said something to her which a girl with her spirit could not tolerate. He determined to ascertain the reason at once, so leaving the group on the terrace unceremoniously he proceeded in search of his mother. Mrs. Merrick had gone home and he found Mrs. Marshall busy with some embroidery in her room.

"Why, Roy, what's the matter? You look worried," she smiled as he entered.

He did not wait to seek words, but plunged right in.
"Mother, what's this Grace tells me? Miss Vincent
is going to leave us?"

His mother arched her eyebrows in well simulated surprise. "What interest can you take in the goings and comings of your sister's governess?"

Roy's surmise that his mother's suspicions had been aroused was correct. Sooner even than the lynx-eyed contractor, Mrs. Marshall had noticed her son's marked liking for Miss Vincent's company. She had said nothing to her husband, as she shrank from arousing his wrath, but she made up her mind that Grace's governess would have to go. She was sorry, for she liked Eunice, and she knew it would also be

a blow to Grace, but they could not afford to take any chances. It was so unusual for Roy to notice any girl that when he did it was likely to be serious unless checked in the bud. So Mrs. Marshall had fully made up her mind to give the governess notice when Eunice came to her and said she wished to go. Mrs. Marshall paused and looked at her son for an answer, but he said nothing, standing in embarrassed silence.

"It's a good thing Lucy didn't hear you," she said dryly.

Unable to restrain himself longer, Roy burst out:

"Why beat about the bush any longer, mother? You must have seen that I cannot bear Lucy. The very sight of her is odious to me."

"And Miss Vincent?" inquired his mother significantly, "is she less objectionable to you?"

The young man flushed and made no reply. But Mrs. Marshall did not need any further explanation. She sighed and shook her head:

"Ah, Roy, a mother's instinct is seldom at fault. When Miss Vincent came to me this morning and told me that she must go, without being able to give me any satisfactory reason, it only confirmed what I had already guessed. If she hadn't left of her own accord I should have sent her away. But she has wisely taken the only step a self-respecting girl could take. I admire her for it. Your intentions have

placed her in a false position here. As to Lucy, I feared how that would end. I can't blame you for not liking the girl. I told your father she was not suited to you, but he would not listen to me. It will be a terrible disappointment to your father. I would be afraid to tell him. Has anything definite passed between you and Miss Vincent?"

"No, I have not spoken to her as yet because I did not have the courage." Then with a burst of enthusiasm he cried: "Oh, you don't know what a splendid character she has! There's as much difference between her and Lucy as there is between a flawless pearl and a glass imitation. I love her as I never believed I could love any woman. I want to make her my wife. She is necessary to me. With her at my side I could succeed at anything, fail in nothing. I never felt that way with Lucy."

Mrs. Marshall shook her head.

"Your father will never give his consent, Roy. This girl may be all you say, but she has one cardinal fault—she is penniless. He has explained to you why you must marry for money. If you were to go against his wishes and marry this girl in spite of him, he would have nothing more to do with you—I'm sure of that."

"All right," retorted Roy angrily, "then I'll see what I can do for myself. This is a free country. I am of age and my own master. I refuse to be

shackled to a woman I despise. Why should I suffer that Marshall & Company shall prosper?"

"It seems unjust," replied his mother, "but life is like that. What we crave for most is hard to get. and often when we get it we find we did not want it so much after all. Men and women are continually pursuing the shadow. The unattainable is really what we desire most. How can you be sure, on so short an acquaintance, that she is the girl who would make you happy? You do not even know if she cares for Disinterested love is a beautiful ideal; one seldom sees it. You are just about to start on a business career. You can do nothing without money. You would be insane to throw away fortune and incur the impossibilities of married life with a girl who could bring you nothing. You must think of your material interests. Romance is all very well, but one can't live on love alone. Your father is right from his standpoint—a standpoint based upon life expe-This girl has nothing, whereas Lucy will rience. bring you \$200,000 and more. Stop and think, Roy. Don't make a mistake. So many lives have been wrecked by young people being obstinate in these matters. Let older heads think for you. Your father has explained the situation frankly to you. The business needs the money which your marriage with Lucy will bring. That is where your future lies, your hopes of success, your happiness. Your infatuation

for Miss Vincent is only a passing fancy. Tomorrow she will be gone and you will speedily forget her."

"Never!" he exclaimed with an earnestness that astonished his mother. "Happiness cannot be built on an arrangement so mercenary, sordid, and degrading. Such marriages keep the divorce courts busy and corrupt the public morals. Look at our multimillionaires' daughters who purchased foreign titles with their money. How many of those marriages turn out well? Think of the indignities, the humiliations, the mental suffering those American women have borne in silence, before they fled from their cads of husbands and confessed to a sensation-loving world that their dollar-made marriage was a hideous failure! There is only one kind of marriage which endures and which is productive of happiness—the marriage by natural selection, the union that grows out of a man's true love for a good woman. If I'm honest in nothing else I want to be honest with the woman I make my wife. I refuse to live a lie. If Miss Vincent will have me I will marry her, cost what it may."

He dropped his defiant tone and pleaded with her. Marriage, he argued, had done more to elevate man than any other phase of the civilization which distinguished him from the brute. The honest, true marriage born of mutual attraction and nourished on love and affection, was a splendid, vital institution,

inseparable from the health and well-being of the State. Money matches, resting wholly on self-interest, without an iota of regard or affection on either side, and often a cloak for polygamous practices, were merely legalized cohabitation, demoralizing and degrading the whole people, and if permitted to thrive in our social life would, like a cancer, sap and undermine the vitality of the nation.

"Mother," he cried, "is it worthy of you to ask me to sell myself to help others? Is not your son's happiness dear to you as the prosperity of Marshall & Co.? I feel that this is the girl I should marry? She will help me to success. Lucy Merrick would have made my life a failure. After all," he said with a little nervous laugh which had an ironical ring, "it is not so much a question of whether she will make me a good wife as whether I shall make her a worthy husband."

Mrs. Marshall made no reply. Her son's rebuke cut deep. He was right, she thought. If she allowed herself to argue thus selfishly against her better instincts it was only because she wished to see him prosperous. It was fine to have high principles, but it was hard to pay one's bills. She knew only too well what the tragedy of marrying on nothing a year meant. He was right, too, about the girl. Woman, it was true, was woman's worst enemy. A mother never stopped to think what kind of a husband her

son will make, what chances a girl is taking in committing her happiness to his keeping, but worried only about the comfort and welfare of her own.

"Well, Roy," she said peevishly, "I can do nothing. Miss Vincent simply told me that she was going. Under the circumstances the sooner she goes the better. If your father knew the truth he would not allow her to remain another instant."

"I will see my father," said Roy grimly. "We might as well come to an understanding now. I shall tell him, once for all, that my marrying Lucy Merrick is impossible. Leaving Miss Vincent entirely out of the question—that determination is irrevocable."

He left the room resolved to go at once and have it out with his sire. It was not, however, without considerable trepidation that he turned his footsteps in the direction of the library where he expected to He knew by experience that his father was find him. not a patient man, and when his will was opposed and his wrath aroused he was subject to paroxysms of rage that were almost alarming. The announcement that he, Roy, had to make, shattering as it did all his father's carefully laid and much cherished plans, would be a terrible blow, and no doubt there would be a disagreeable scene. But there was no help The situation must be faced some time. for it. Eunice's resignation had merely precipitated matters. He wondered if it was true that she was leaving Alton Court because of him. If so, he could not be entirely indifferent to her. She wished to escape because she could not trust herself; and his pulse quickened as he thought she might care for him.

He went downstairs expecting to find his father still on the terrace, but when he got there he found they had all gone in. He re-entered the house and went along the corridor leading to the library. As he passed the music room he caught sight of Eunice sitting at the piano. Her back was turned to him and she was playing softly one of Beethoven's sonatas. All his life Roy had been a creature of impulse and he acted on impulse now. Instead of continuing on to the library to confront his father, he entered the music room on tiptoe and approached Eunice noise-She continued to play unconscious of his presence. For a few moments he stood unobserved behind her, drinking in the subtle perfume which arose from her hair, watching her white slender fingers as they glided over the keys. Presently he made a slight movement, and looking up she gave a little cry:

"Oh, Mr. Marshall, how you frightened me! I had no idea you were there."

She rose from the piano and started to arrange some loose sheets of music.

"What's this Grace tells me?" he demanded

abruptly, almost roughly. "You're leaving Alton Court for good?"

"Yes," she answered, avoiding his searching glance, "I have to go."

"You said nothing about it to me," he said in an injured tone. "Why are you going?"

"Must I give a reason?"

She spoke with hauteur as if she resented his tone of proprietorship. He was quick to notice the tinge of sarcasm in her query. He felt she had again snubbed him as she had that first day in the park. But he knew her better now, so he only smiled.

"Excuse me," he said with mock courtesy; "I thought that by this time I was considered enough of a friend to be allowed to take interest in your doings, especially when they seem to be opposed to your best interests, as this sudden departure is."

She was quite disarmed. Her eyes met his. He thought he saw a sadness and melancholy in the gray depths of her eyes. In the dim, uncertain light her face looked paler than usual.

"Forgive me," she murmured. "I know you are my friend. I did not mean to say that to you. But really I must go. There is a reason—a good reason which I cannot explain."

"You can't tell me what it is?" he demanded. She shook her head.

- "Has anyone here been unkind to you—are you less happy or less comfortable than you were?"
 - "No-everyone is kind. I am perfectly happy."
- "Then I don't understand," he said, appearing to be puzzled.

His mother was right. It was from himself that this girl was fleeing and his heart leaped with joy as he realized what he had won. Aloud he added:

"Grace will be sorry to lose you. She loves you dearly. Where are you going? Didn't you tell me you were alone in the world?"

She remained silent, her head averted. In the mirror opposite he could see that she was weeping. He stole close up behind her and whispered softly:

"Before you go—I want to say something to you—something your heart may have told you already. Grace is not the only one here who will miss you, Grace is not the only one here to whom you have made yourself necessary. Eunice, I——"

She rose to elude him and flee, her face flushed, her heart beating wildly like that of a bird caught in a snare. She had dreaded this moment, she had seen it coming and she had planned to run away and escape it. But his hand held her arm in a vise-like grip and his breath was warm upon her cheek. He spoke feverishly, disconnectedly, like a man who has temporarily lost normal control of himself:

"Don't go," he pleaded; "let me finish. Let me say now what I have been eager to tell you for days. I love you. I have loved you ever since that day I found you reading in the park. I thought I knew women. Secretly I despised all women because the only ones I had met were frivolous, empty-headed. You attracted me instantly. Your serene, serious outlook on life, your splendid intelligence, your gentleness, amiability and sweetness of disposition fascinated and charmed me. I saw in you a woman whom any man might be proud to make his life companion—his wife."

She listened in silence, standing apart from him, and in the rapidly fading light of the late afternoon, mellowed by the reddish glow that filtered through the old-fashioned colored glass windows, she looked white and distressed.

"Please don't say any more, Mr. Marshall," she interrupted. "I appreciate the honor you pay me, but I have no right to listen to you. Miss Merrick——"

"Miss Merrick!" he echoed bitterly. "I would not marry Miss Merrick if she were the last woman left in the world. It is only since I have known you that I have fully realized what degradation that would have been. You alone I love—you alone I want for my wife."

"I had no idea," she answered softly, "that you thought of me in that way. I am sorry because—"

She paused and then with an effort added: "because I cannot encourage it."

"But you have encouraged me," he protested hotly. "You encouraged me when you spoke of what a man might achieve with the right kind of a woman to help him, you encouraged me in every word you uttered. A woman can influence a man for good or evil. You would be my influence for good. You have brought the sun into my life. Don't go now and leave me to my former darkness."

"I must-I must!" she said, averting her face.

Roy seized her hands, but quickly she withdrew them, and shrunk farther away from him.

"Ah!" he said bitterly. "I see. I have made a mistake. I thought you were not indifferent to me, but you show me plainly enough that I've made a fool of myself."

"I am not indifferent to you," she replied gently; "I shall always remember you, but—there can be nothing else between us. I am going away so that both of us—you and I—may avoid a mistake that we might regret all our lives. You say that you love me. How can I be sure that you really care for me? You think you do—that I believe. I do not doubt your perfect loyalty. But how can I be certain that it is not a mere infatuation of which you might repent later? It would break my heart if one day I discovered you were sorry that you had married me. I have had

enough misery in the past. I shrink from the risk of fresh sorrow. Besides, do you suppose I want your family to accuse me of having robbed Miss Merrick of your affections? That is why I am leaving Alton Court. Happy as my life has been here, I must go."

She held out her hand and taking his continued: "Forget me, Mr. Marshall. Your family interests, your business future depend on your marrying in accordance with your father's wishes. Don't imperil the splendid future he has planned for you. I am a poor girl without family or fortune, and who must make her livelihood as best she can. You will succeed in everything you undertake. I know that. I shall watch your career from afar and constantly pray for your success. But our lives lie apart. Good-by!"

Her voice trembled with an emotion which she endeavored to conceal, and withdrawing her hand which was still clasped in his, she turned to leave the room. Roy caught her in his arms.

"I will not let you go," he cried. "I love you—I love you. You admit that you care for me. Why should not your life be happy too? If you go, then I go too. I'll follow you till the end of the earth. Now I have found you I will not consent to lose you. If you really care for me, why should you not marry me? Eunice, be my wife! I love you! I love you!"

He spoke ardently, passionately, his strong arms clasping her slender form tightly against his breast.

For a moment she rested motionless in his embrace, her bosom heaving. He seemed to have communicated to her something of his ardor. She abandoned herself and for a brief instant her head dropped upon his shoulder. But quickly the moment of weakness passed. She recovered her self-possession and drew away.

"No, no," she said, shaking her head, "it cannot be. I will not come between you and your parents—I will not. I shall leave Alton Court to-morrow morning."

She spoke in a broken, somewhat convulsive voice and with a manifest effort as if trying to stifle her own feelings, to convince him, against her own wish, that it was folly to attempt to dissuade her from her purpose. Her determination was not to be shaken. had fully made up her mind to go. She could not remain a day longer in this house conscious, as she had been for some days, that Roy was paying her unusual attention and that she cared for him more than she dared admit even to herself. She felt a sense of guilt as if she were to blame for this mutual attraction which she knew could only have one ending -unhappiness for her. She liked Roy immensely, more than anyone she had ever known; whether it was love she felt for him she did not know. She only knew that the day seemed brighter when he joined them in those stolen interviews in the park and that the

time dragged when he had gone. She thought too much of Roy to believe that he was deliberately trifling with her. On the contrary, his every word and action assured her that he really liked her. But what was the use? His position, his future success demanded other plans. Even if he were willing she would refuse the responsibility of wrecking his career. No, she must go.

Roy stood looking at her in gloomy silence.

"Where will you go? What will you do?" he demanded.

"I shall do what I did before I came here—teach school," she replied wearily. "The position I left in Boston I can have for the asking. I shall go back there. Good-by," she added, smiling and extending her hand; "we part good friends."

He took her hand in silence.

"Not good-by," he murmured. "I shall come for you."

"No," she answered resolutely, "indeed you must not. I forbid it. You must forget me. Good-by."

There was a swish of skirts and she had disappeared. Roy stood a moment irresolute, not knowing what to do, whether to run after her and forbid her departure or to go and have it out with his father. He felt just in the mood for a fight and he did not care what happened. He never knew how much he loved her until now and the thought that he might lose her-

maddened him. He would see her again in the morning before her departure, and ask her permission to make at least one call on her in Boston. There, away from his father's influence, he would have a better chance.

As he stood there cogitating, he did not hear a light step behind him and he was unconscious anyone was there until he heard a laughing voice exclaim:

"Hallo, Roy, how serious you look! Whatever can you be thinking about? You look as if you had lost your best friend."

It was Grace.

"Is that you, sis?" he said, putting his arm affectionately around her. "Yes—you're right, I am about to lose a friend."

The young girl looked up at him in wonder. She was not accustomed to see her brother so grave.

"A friend!" she echoed wonderingly, "what friend?" Then light dawned upon her. "You mean Miss Vincent!" she exclaimed.

He nodded.

The young girl clapped her hands and gave vent to an exultant yell not exactly ladylike, but so spontaneous and genuine that Roy, worried as he was, could not help smiling.

"Oh, I'm so glad, Roy! So you really like Eunice?"

Her big brother patted her head affectionately.

"Yes, dear, and what's more I mean to marry her. She's running away simply because she's afraid of them all. But I'm going to follow her, and I'll make her my wife or I'm a duffer."

"Oh, how perfectly lovely!" cried Grace enthusiastically. "Then Eunice and I will really be sisters. But Lucy?" she asked.

"Lucy?" he echoed. "Oh, she won't miss me, so long as she has Violet."

"Do mother and father know?" asked Grace.

"Mother does and I shall speak to father tomorrow morning. I don't want to worry him tonight."

Grace put up her face to be kissed.

"I'm so happy, Roy dear," she said. "I always disliked Lucy. I was heartbroken at the thought that one day she would be mistress here. You are far too good for such a girl as that. Eunice will make you a good wife even if she is poor. Anyhow," she added naïvely, "I don't see why a man wants money with his wife. Surely you can make enough for both."

Roy stooped and kissed her.

"I'll make enough for both, sis, never fear. I feel more of a man already for having emancipated myself from that bargain-counter match. If I can prevail upon Eunice to marry me, I'll be the happiest man in the whole world."

CHAPTER V

THE forenoon of the following day Eunice devoted to packing her things prior to her departure from Alton Court. At the express wish of Mrs. Marshall and the earnest and tearful entreaties of Grace, she had consented to stay for an early luncheon, when she could catch the 1.30 train at Dedham. Larry was to take her to the station in the automobile and Grace had obtained permission to see her governess off.

Mrs. Marshall had every reason to treat the girl kindly. During her stay at Alton Court Eunice had performed her duties conscientiously and well. There were no grounds for complaint. Grace had never been in better spirits nor shown greater progress in her studies. From almost every point of view Miss Vincent was a most desirable young person. The only reproach that could be brought against her was that she had proved too attractive to a young man whom nobody, least of all his mother, had dreamed was susceptible to the subtle charms of the fair sex. This love affair was, indeed, most unfortunate. It would be disastrous if it proved serious. But once the girl was out of sight it was probable

that Roy would forget her. It was human nature. Of course, he was very determined now and talked recklessly of the things he would do if he did not get his way, but all young men in love were equally rash and impulsive. Cooler reflection would convince him of the folly of it and then the relations with the Merricks would be resumed and everything go on nicely as before. That, thought his mother, was certainly a solution devoutly to be wished for. As it was now, everything was at sixes and sevens. situation was awkward for everybody. Both Mr. and Mrs. Merrick had already shown irritation at Roy's indifference toward their daughter, and had hinted that they would withdraw altogether unless the engagement were formally announced without further delay. So Mrs. Marshall comforted herself. really felt a sense of obligation to Eunice for having voluntarily resigned and thus spared her the onerous necessity of discharging her.

But it was with a heavy heart that, in the privacy of her own room, Eunice began to make preparations for departure. Alton Court had been her home for the last twelve months; in fact it was the only place she had known since her mother died that seemed like home. In front of Mrs. Marshall and even before Grace, she had managed to appear proudly indifferent to the circumstances which were driving her friendless and practically penniless back into the heartless,

unsympathetic world. But now, when there was no one to see, the girl's eyes filled with tears of self-pity as she realized how utterly alone she was, how wide the world, and of what little consequence to anybody her own troubles were. She had practically no relations to go to. A sister of her mother's lived somewhere in San Francisco, but they had not corresponded for years, while her father's family she had never known. She must again live among strangers, as she had the year immediately following her mother's death, cheaply in some second-hand boardinghouse, amid sordid, commonplace surroundings. She had saved a few hundred dollars, but that would barely last her untileshe secured another position. She thought she could get back her old place as assistant teacher at the Misses Pell's Select Academy for Young Ladies on Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, but she was not sure. It was a dismal outlook at best. seemed like some sort of punishment because she had been so happy all these months at Alton Court. Yes. she had no alternative but to go. Her self-respect, his future happiness, demanded it.

Then she thought of Roy. Would he really care? Wouldn't he forget her directly she was gone? The first day she had seen him—the day of the upset on the lake—she had not noticed him particularly. She felt grateful to him for having extricated Grace and herself from their predicament, and she had admired

his strength and skill in the water, but that was the extent of her interest. No idea of thinking of him in any other way ever crossed her mind. Like many girls who are engrossed in study, and taken up with the more serious aspects of life, Eunice had given little attention to the opposite sex. She was not vain, so she never dressed to attract men; she was not a coquette, so she never flirted with them. the society and companionship of men not because they were of the opposite sex, but because their outlook on life was different from that of the feminine mindbroader, more vigorous. She had paid no attention to Roy until that afternoon he passed her in the park, and then she felt it was her duty to thank him for the service he had rendered and which, until then, she had been unable to do. When he had stayed and talked with her she was impressed by his sound, common-sense views, his fund of information on almost every topic, his frank manliness. And as they got better acquainted and he told her of his hopes and plans, she found he was a man of strong character and lovable disposition. It was his seriousness, perhaps, that appealed to her more than anything else. He said nothing about the marriage that had been prepared for him, but she was not long in discovering that it was distasteful to him, and secretly she was glad, for it would have degraded him in her eyes had he accepted it without protest. He spoke well and

with a peculiar charm, and soon she found herself deriving pleasure from these chats under the trees.

Almost imperceptibly he brought a new note into her life, a novel exquisite sensation she had never known, and it surprised her to find how eagerly each day she anticipated hearing his step on the gravel walk. Such mutual interest in two healthy young persons of the opposite sex could lead only direction. They would have been less than human had they not fallen in love. say, Eunice did not recognize strange to delightful the strange, feeling she experienced. It took her by surprise because she was wholly unprepared, and now that it slowly dawned upon her that this man had come into her life, that she loved him, that unwittingly she had brought upon herself a new misery, she was overwhelmed with a sense of new misfortune. That she could ever be his wife was, to her mind, out of the question. brief moment her heart had leaped tumultuously as she saw herself mistress of Alton Court, and then the mirage quickly faded away, as she realized the impossibility of such a dream. That Roy would propose marriage to her was, she thought, inevitable. guessed that he loved her, but what was the use? Even if she felt sure that she loved him, she would still refuse to listen to him. She would banish from her heart the image of his face and from her ears the

sound of his voice, for she was convinced only unhappiness could come of it. His success depended upon his marrying according to his father's wishes. If he disobeyed and married her he would lose everything. He might not mind now, but later, when difficulties of money began, he would blame her, the penniless woman he had married. No, the risk was too great.

In her heart she felt she could do more to build Roy's fortune than Miss Merrick could do with all her money, but there was the possibility of failure, and she shrunk from the responsibility. She was determined that no one should ever reproach her with having come between him and his future. And now she knew from his own lips that he loved her. Amid the gathering purple shadows of the music-room the evening before he had told her so. He had asked her to be his wife! Ah, it was sweet, if only for a fleeting second, to know she was not entirely deserted and neglected, that there was one at least to whom she was all the world. What a strange thrill had run through her when for that brief moment he had clasped her to his breast! How exquisite it was to be there, if only for an instant, in that ardent embrace. Sheltered in those strong arms she need worry no longer, the lonely, desolate world would have no more terrors for her, her life thenceforth would be ideally happy. When he pleaded with her, and she realized what she was refusing, she felt a sensation she had never known before, a feeling that she must throw herself in his arms and weep. Was that love? Yes, she did care for him, she did love him—she did not dare think how much. But she must go away and forget. She was determined that neither he nor anyone should ever reproach her with having spoiled his career.

But she suffered. She was doing what she thought was right and her heart was broken in the effort. Her face was pale and her eyes were rimmed with more than a suspicion of redness by the time she had finished packing. She was putting the final touches to her preparations when there came a timid knock at the door.

"May I come in?" cried Grace, putting her head in. It was the same mischievous, roguish face, but her manner lacked its usual buoyancy and her sunny smile was missing.

Eunice held out her hand and the young girl sprang forward and threw her arms around her teacher's neck.

- "Oh, Eunice, must you really go?"
- "Yes, dear, really." Pointing to her piled-up trunks, she added with a forced smile: "You see, I'm quite ready."
- "We shall miss you dreadfully," said Grace disconsolately.
 - "We?" echoed Eunice. "Who's we?"

"Why, I, of course, and—Roy. You remember what I told you in the park. It is true. Roy doesn't want to marry Miss Merrick. It is you he loves. Oh, please, Eunice, tell him you will! It would make him so happy—and me too."

She pleaded with such childish naïveté that Eunice could not help smiling, heavy-hearted as she was. But she shook her head.

"No, dear, it is impossible. You do not understand. Your brother must marry Miss Merrick. There are reasons that compel him. Even if there were not, it would make no difference. I must go all the same."

Finding it was useless to coax further, Grace resigned herself to the inevitable, only exacting a promise that Eunice would write her a long letter at least every other day, and the rest of the morning until luncheon was spent in each other's company. Eunice stayed in her own room by design. She did not wish to see Roy again before she left. She knew it would only unnerve her, and make her departure the harder.

Roy, meantime, was bracing himself for the dreaded interview with his father. All morning he had roamed about the house in the hope of seeing Eunice, but she stayed in her room. He did not even know the precise hour of her departure. He might be able to get a few words with her before she left. But if he did not, he would seek her out in Boston. Never in his life had he felt so determined about anything as about

this. There was a tradition in the family that once a Marshall set his mind on doing a thing that thing was done quickly, and Roy felt he had inherited at least that quality from his ancestors. He set his teeth and swore by all he held sacred that he would not rest until he made Eunice his wife. The Merrick millions, the drug business, everything else might go hang. One woman's gray eyes, one woman's sweet serious smile were worth to him more than all the Nothing could make him waver in his purpose. If Eunice would have him, he would marry her. father would storm and rave and probably have nothing more to do with him. Well, what of it? Marshall & Co. was not the only business opportunity in the world. He would shift for himself. no better than other men who had to make their It would be all the more own way in the world. creditable to him if he achieved success by his own efforts and without having a position ready made for him.

It was nearly noon when he entered the library. Mr. Marshall was going through the morning's mail.

"Hello, Roy," said his father pleasantly, "sit down. I'm just going through the letters—reports of sales, new orders—nothing but business. I'm getting tired of it. I'll be glad to turn it over to you, my boy."

Roy made no reply. He was getting more nervous

every minute. Mr. Marshall noticed there was something unusual in his manner, for he added:

"What's amiss? You seem out of sorts. Liver out of order?"

Thus offered a loophole, Roy hesitated no longer. He plunged right in.

"Father," he stammered, "I have something serious to tell you. I——"

He stopped as if seeking words. Mr. Marshall laid down on the table the letter he was reading and looked anxiously at his son.

"Something serious?" he echoed. Then with some show of anxiety he added: "You are not ill, are you?"

"No—it's nothing of that sort," said Roy.
"But——"

Again he halted, embarrassed, intimidated by his father's keen, searching scrutiny.

"Well, boy, out with it! You seem tongue-tied," cried Mr. Marshall, impatiently.

Roy advanced nearer the desk at which his father was sitting, and, his face pale, his voice slightly trembling, he said:

"It's simply this, sir. I cannot marry Lucy Merrick. It's out of the question. This thing must be understood once for all."

For a moment Mr. Marshall sat motionless, as if petrified, staring vacantly at his son. Astonishment

rendered him speechless. Then, bending forward and speaking slowly and distinctly as if anxious to emphasize each word, he asked:

"What do you mean? Have you suddenly lost your senses?"

"No," cried Roy boldly. "I have found my senses." Now that the ice was broken he was rapidly regaining his courage. "I cannot marry Lucy Merrick," he went on, "for I don't care two straws for her. Such a marriage would degrade me, and could end only in unhappiness."

Mr. Marshall had risen from his seat and stood confronting his son. His hands twitched, his eyes flashed and his leonine white hair seemed to bristle with anger. That his son should come to him at this late hour and attempt to repudiate an agreement practically already settled seemed to him preposterous.

"This is indeed serious news," he said with a forced laugh. Then, sternly, he demanded, "Do you realize how serious?"

Roy's face was white and determined. He realized that this was the crisis. Either his father would have to accept the new situation or they must part. He was fighting for his personal freedom, for the woman he loved. Mr. Marshall, for the first time, saw in his son's attitude that he was prepared to defy his authority.

"Yes, sir," answered Roy quietly, "I fully appre-

ciate that this will be a disappointment to you and I am sorry. But I had not given the matter proper consideration. I cannot jeopardize my future happiness. I cannot degrade myself—even to save Marshall & Company."

His father made a move forward, his hand half raised, then stopped. His face grew red and apoplectic, the big blue veins stood out like cords on his brown neck, the nervous twitching of his lips indicated the effort he was making to restrain himself. Roy slipped back, expecting some explosion of wrath that would end in violence.

"May I ask," cried Mr. Marshall when he had somewhat recovered his sang-froid, "what has occurred to inspire this sudden objection to Lucy? We were talking of her only yesterday and you said nothing."

"I was about to tell you, only something interrupted. Besides I did not know that——"

He left the sentence uncompleted.

"You did not know what?" demanded Mr. Marshall.

Roy did not reply. Should he confess that he loved another girl and that it was the fear that he might lose her which made him speak out? But his father spared him the trouble. Putting two and two together he had arrived at the truth.

"So that's it," he exclaimed. "You did not know

Miss Vincent was going. So there were grounds for my suspicions, after all! There has been some lovemaking with the governess." His rising anger getting the better of him, he brought his fist down on his desk and cried angrily: "It's a good thing she's going today, or I'd have her put out."

Roy flushed and half started forward, ready to resent this insult to the woman he loved.

"Please don't speak of Miss Vincent in that way, father. I expect to make her my wife!"

"Your wife!" shouted Mr. Marshall, his voice shaking with rage, his eyes glowing like living coals. "Do you dare to come here and tell me that you would deliberately sacrifice my interests and ruin your own future by marrying a penniless girl?"

"I cannot agree with you, sir," answered Roy firmly. "With Miss Vincent for a wife my future would be made, not ruined."

Mr. Marshall shrugged his shoulders and, turning his back on his son, paced the room like an angry lion. Roy stood silent, wondering what would happen next. Suddenly his father gave a quick half turn and laid his hand on his son's shoulder.

"Roy," he said calmly, "I took you to be intelligent, shrewd, free from the follies that spoil most young men. I expected you would be a comfort to me in my old age. I was mistaken."

The old gentlemap passed his hand across his eyes



as if to wipe away a tear. Roy was quick to respond to the first sign of paternal sympathy.

"Father," he said, "I am sorry to displease you in this matter. But put yourself in my place. You would not have me go into this marriage with a lie on my lips—you would not have your son a perjurer!"

Mr. Marshall had resumed his pacing of the room, a habit he had when thinking hard. When he turned to Roy again there was no sign of weakness or tenderness in his face. It was set and stern.

"May I ask," he said coldly, "what you suggest—what your plan is?"

Unprepared for this apparently conciliatory attitude, Roy was puzzled what to say. He had no definite plan. The future was vague and uncertain. Finally he said:

"I have made no plans, sir. I hope to make Miss Vincent my wife and, with your consent, I should still wish to enter Marshall & Company as arranged."

His father resumed his seat at the desk. His agitation of manner had entirely disappeared. He was now as cool and decisive as an attorney cross-examining a witness on the stand.

"Roy," he said, "I can't believe you to be so utterly stupid as to expect you can enter the business as my successor without bringing capital with you. I explained the situation to you. It has not changed

since. If you are decided on committing moral suicide I can't stop you. You are of age; I have no legal authority over you. As your father I can only advise you. That advice you refuse to listen to; therefore I am finished with you. You can do as you like. Go where you like. I will wait till your brother is old enough. I think he will have more sense."

He stopped talking and a suspicious moisture about his eyes suggested that he was not as unconcerned inwardly as he appeared outwardly. Rising suddenly from the desk, he again advanced toward Roy.

"Don't fight your old father, Roy; think well before you do something you'll regret all your life. Boy," he went on solemnly, "we Marshalls come of an obstinate race. When we want anything we get For the last five years of my life I have planned and schemed to have you succeed me as head of the firm. It has been the ambition of my old age to see you comfortably married, with money enough to put the business on its feet again and to keep the place up as we have been accustomed to do. You approved of the girl I found for you, you encouraged me to proceed with the arrangement. If you go back on your word you dishonor your father, and that I should never forgive. I hold you to your word. You'll soon forget this Miss Vincent. Be sensible and marry Lucy. It is for your happiness that I am pleading."

Roy shook his head as he replied firmly:

"Father, what you say about the men of our family getting what they want fits me as well as it does you. I want to marry Miss Vincent and I propose doing so. Let me marry the girl I love and I'll go into the business without money, in a subordinate position if you will, and climb my way up by sheer hard work. But I am determined to marry the girl I love. It breaks my heart to have to disregard your wishes in this matter, but my whole future is at stake. I am entitled to my share of life's happiness."

He looked imploringly at his father, but the latter averted his face, while his voice was unbending and unpitying.

"Roy," he said coldly, "we might argue this matter all day. I am a man of few words. You know my wishes; I expect you to comply with them. I insist—mind you, I insist that you give up all thought of this girl and let things go on as they were before. When a son is so lacking in intelligence and common sense as to rush blindly to destruction it becomes a parent's duty to extend his arm to prevent him dashing over the precipice. Now hear me well, Roy. I forbid you absolutely to have anything further to do with this Miss Vincent."

"And if I refuse?" demanded Roy hotly, defiantly.

"If you refuse," echoed his father sternly—" if you wilfully disobey me, then I am done with you forever!

You can go where you like, do what you like! You will be no son of mine. I will remain in harness a few years longer until your brother can take the place I had planned to give you. Choose—stay or go!"

The young man wavered for a moment, but only for a moment. Turning to his father, he said firmly:

"So be it, father. I choose—to go! I should no longer respect myself—you could not respect me—if I did anything else. I will let Ned take my place. I will go out into the world and see what I can do for myself."

"Is that final, Roy?" demanded his father.

"Yes—final. I shall go at once; I shall get what I can, do what I can—anything so long as it is respectable. And I shall make Eunice Vincent my wife."

Livid with rage, Mr. Marshall stamped his foot and pointed to the door, almost shouting:

"I tried to convince you of your mistake by arousing your filial affection; I sought to save you from your folly by appealing to your common sense. But you are as stubborn and thick-headed as an army mule. Go your own way! Go your own way! You'll find it's not so easy as you imagine. There's the door. Go!"

Roy turned to go. At any other time he would have felt bad; he might have rushed back and begged forgiveness. But his father had insulted the woman he loved. From that moment his heart was turned to stone. Henceforth his home was elsewhere.

As he left the library he heard the quick pugh! pugh! of the automobile on the path outside the house. At that moment his mother entered from the terrace.

- "Who was that?" he asked.
- "Miss Vincent has just gone," she replied calmly.
- "Oh," said Roy with apparent unconcern. Then he added laconically: "I'm going too."

CHAPTER VI

THE Misses Pell's Academy for Young Ladies on Commonwealth Avenue was considered one of the most exclusive educational institutions in Boston. Miss Martha and Miss Sarah Pell. who had conducted the school for many years-the oldest inhabitant could not remember exactly how many-were two elderly spinsters whose personal appearance was almost grotesquely typical of the traditional "schoolmarm." The sisters were both tall and gaunt, each wore spectacles, corkscrew curls and little lace caps. Earlier in life—possibly half a century earlier—they had both been disappointed in love affairs, and while this amatory contretemps had led them to take a jaundiced view of life in general and of the male sex in particular, it had affected their respective characters differently. It had made Miss Martha a sour virago. Never very amiably disposed under the most favorable circumstances, under the sting of her fancied wrong she had become a veritable termagant. She bullied the teachers and terrorized the pupils—even the servants and the tradespeople were afraid of her. Nearly six feet tall, with a deep masculine voice of a peculiarly harsh and rasping quality, her appearance was decidedly forbidding. she addressed anyone at all, it usually was to scold, and when she passed through the class-room, like a frigate under full sail, the pupils scurried like frightened rabbits out of her path. During school hours she was irritable and morose, dictatorial and tyrannical, and when her temper was ruffled, as happened frequently, she boxed vigorously every ear within reach, regardless whether their owner deserved punishment or not. The only occasions on which she had been known to smile was when a parent called to pay in advance for the term. Miss Sarah, naturally milder in disposition, was less aggressive, and consequently less unpopular. Although also smarting from the recollection of man's inconstancy, she had taken her disappointment in a more Christian spirit, accepting her maidenly solitude with philosophical resigna-She was stiff and prim and stood herself in no little awe of her obstreperous sister, but in speech and manner she was more gentle and approachable. That is why she was intrusted with direct supervision of the classes, while Miss Martha busied herself almost exclusively with the business management and housekeeping.

This was where Eunice had gone after leaving Alton Court. As she anticipated, she had no difficulty in getting her old position back. The Misses Pell were, in fact, glad to have her return. She was competent, whereas her successor had proved unsatisfactory; so, after a few days spent in a boarding-house, Eunice moved with all her effects to Commonwealth Avenue. It was now September. She could count on staying at the Academy until the following July, which would give her ample time to look around for something more congenial and remunerative.

But what a change from Alton Court, with its spacious rooms, its beautiful park, its pervading atmosphere of good breeding! Eunice sighed as she viewed her new surroundings, dingy and commonplace, and thought of the happy days that were gone, perhaps forever. She had a small stuffy hall bedroom on the servants' floor, with access to the solitary bathroom only on giving notice the day before. night she was unable to sleep, and attempted to read or sew in her room, she was reminded the next morning by the grim Miss Martha that the gas bills were simply outrageous, and lights must be out at ten There were two other teachers beside herself-one a dark-eyed Frenchwoman, the other a blonde fräulein. The trio took their frugal meals together. The food was of the poorest quality. Martha grudged everything they ate, and even the time they spent at the table. They were often hungry, but they put up with hardships and discomforts uncomplainingly, unable to remedy their condition, practically at the mercy of two unsympathetic women bent on getting out of them all the work possible in return for their meagre wage. Sisters in misery, they tried to forget the humiliations and petty annoyances to which they were daily subjected by telling each other about better times they had known. Eunice had not much to relate, but mademoiselle spoke with bated breath of her dear Paris, which she hoped to see once more before she died, while the fräulein descanted in no less affectionate terms of her native Munich.

To Eunice usually fell the duty of acting as chaperon during the morning and afternoon promenade when the dear girl pupils walked out demurely, eyes cast down, two and two, as the animals entered the ark. The girls liked Eunice as much as they detested Miss Martha, and there was general consternation in the dovecote on those occasions when the latter decided that Eunice should stay at home and she would go in her stead. Then the pupils had to look to their behavior. Not a thing escaped Miss Martha's eagle eye during the march. Woe to the bold maiden whom she caught casting a furtive glance at some forward young man! The punishment on their return was swift and awful.

Three weeks had passed since Eunice had left Alton Court. She had heard nothing of Roy and had received only one letter from Grace, who did not mention her brother. She was glad he did not come to her as

he said he would. It would only make her wretched to see him again. No doubt after her departure he had seen matters in a new light—as his father wished him to see them. Yet, at heart, she was surprised and a little chagrined at his long silence. It seemed hardly possible that he could have banished her so soon from his mind, even if he had given up all other hopes of her.

One afternoon while she was initiating a particularly stupid set of girls into the mysteries of vulgar fractions, Miss Martha bounced into the class-room, looking very much flustered. The girls, scenting a storm, nudged each other and glued their eyes to their arithmetic books. Miss Martha, in a deep bass voice, summoned Eunice to her desk.

"Miss Vincent," she said icily, "a person is downstairs waiting to see you. You can go and see him this time, but I want one thing thoroughly understood if you wish to remain in this institution. There must be no gentlemen callers—young or old. This person is elderly, so I suppose it's all right; but, understand me, I won't have gentlemen callers of any age—is that clear?"

"Yes, Miss Martha, quite."

For a moment Eunice's heart had given a wild leap. She thought it was Roy who had come after all. But when she heard the word "elderly" her hopes fell. Who could it be? She hurried downstairs, and in the dimly lighted reception-room was an elderly gentleman with white hair. His back was turned and for a moment she did not recognize him. He turned on hearing her step. It was Mr. Marshall, Senior. She was so surprised that she could articulate nothing. The words stuck in her throat. At first she was alarmed, fearing something had happened. What, she wondered, could have brought Mr. Marshall to her? He advanced towards her.

"You little expected to see me, Miss Vincent!" he began.

"No," stammered Eunice, "I confess I'm surprised. I hope nothing is the matter."

He shook his head.

"No, nothing is the matter—that is," he stammered, "nothing we can't remedy. I came to see you on a little matter of business."

Eunice waved him to a seat and, taking a chair opposite him, waited to hear what he had to say.

"Miss Vincent," he said, "I am a blunt business man, accustomed to put things bluntly, as you may have noticed during the time you were at Alton Court. I am going to ask you a plain question. I want you to answer me frankly."

Eunice surmised what was coming, but was hardly prepared for the form it took. She replied with quiet dignity:

"I will answer to the best of my ability, Mr. Marshall."

"Will you tell me the truth?" demanded the old gentleman, looking at her dubiously.

The girl's eyes flashed.

"I do not know how to lie!" she retorted.

He continued looking at her in silence, taking in every detail of her face, form and dress, as if now he saw for the first time this young woman who had robbed him of a son.

"Where is Roy?" he demanded of her abruptly.

"Your son!" echoed Eunice, startled. Quickly recovering her self-possession, she asked: "Isn't he at Alton Court? How should I know his whereabouts?"

"No, he left Alton Court the same day you did. He told me he was determined to marry you. That's the last we've seen of him. I got your address from Grace and came here, thinking, of course, that you'd know. You say he hasn't been here?" he said incredulously.

"No, he has not been here," answered Eunice; "I have not seen your son since the day I left your home."

Her heart was beating so furiously that she was afraid the old gentleman would see it. Roy had told them he loved her—he had done what he had said he'd do—broken with his father and everything for her sake!

Mr. Marshall eyed the girl keenly. Was she hiding

something from him? Was it possible that Roy had let three weeks go by without seeking her out?

"Well!" he said after a pause, "if he hasn't been here already, he's likely to come any day. I'm glad I got here before him. I want to put before you a plain, straightforward business proposition."

He stopped short and looked at her as if doubtful of his ground. She listened patiently, not comprehending. Finally he blurted out:

"My son has made an ass of himself, Miss Vincent. He has fallen head over in heels in love with you and——"

He halted in confusion, conscious of the faux pas he had made.

"Excuse me—young lady—I'm an old man and don't pick my words. I mean that it was an act of criminal folly to fall in love with you when his real interests were elsewhere. I had planned a brilliant career for him. With the money and influence a rich marriage would bring him he might have been governor of Massachusetts. He has chosen to throw it away; he has run wilfully to destruction; and you, indirectly, are the cause!"

He paused, hoping she would say something in selfjustification, but she merely gazed out of the window as if what he were saying did not concern her in the least. He went on:

"But there is still hope. You say you have not

seen Roy. I believe you. But he will come. Of that I am certain. And when he does come I want you to help me."

He fumbled inside his breast pocket and produced a slip of white paper.

"Here!" he said, "this is for you if you'll help me."

Mechanically she extended her hand and took the paper. She looked at it for a moment and a deep flush spread over her face and neck. It was a check to her order for \$1,000.

"What is this?" she asked.

"I will tell you," he answered quickly, pleased to see she took it so sensibly. "I, of course, appreciate your position. Roy, no doubt, has said a lot of things he should not have said and led you to entertain hopes that can never be realized. Roy must marry a girl with money. I realize that it is a disappointment to you, but when one has youth and-beauty, one soon forgets. The world is large. There are plenty of eligible young men left. Leave us Roy-both for his sake and for ours. Don't take our son from us. Refuse to have anything to do with him. Go away! If you leave Boston he will soon tire of pursuing you, and gradually he'll forget you. With this \$1,000 you can go to some other city, secure a position in some family or school, and you'll always have a nice little capital in case you marry or fall ill."

He ceased speaking and waited to hear what she had to say.

- "Have you quite finished?" she said calmly.
- "Yes-what is your answer?"

Rising from her seat she tore the check to pieces and tossed them in the empty grate.

- "That is my answer!" she exclaimed.
- "You'refuse?" he said, also rising.
- "Did you think," she said bitterly, "that I am a woman to be bought? Have you no respect for any woman? Have I deserved to be treated with this contempt?"

Mr. Marshall hastened to apologize; approaching her, he said soothingly:

"Really, my dear young lady, I---"

But she brushed past him, and, her bosom heaving with pent-up excitement, her eyes flashing with anger, she lashed him with her scorn:

"You measure me by your own standard—the money standard! You speak as if there were no such thing as a human heart, no such thing as honesty in man or virtue in woman. Rich marriage! Influential position! That's all that concerns you! You don't stop to consider if the girl is likely to make him a good wife. Your son's happiness is nothing—your own selfish ends everything. You are ready to sacrifice your own flesh and blood on the altar of your own interests! All that you have said to me I have

said myself to your son. Against my own interests, in violence to my own feelings—for I love him, do you hear, I love your son!—I told him I would not marry him. I refused to come between him and the plans you had made for him."

"You said that?" cried Mr. Marshall, starting forward.

"Yes—I did it for his sake. He was full of enthusiasm, looking forward to the day when he would enter your business. I knew that my marrying him would make that impossible. So I told him there could never be anything between us. The next day I left Alton Court and I have not seen him since."

Mr. Marshall's eyes beamed. He looked with admiration mingled with respect at this frail girl who, by sheer force of character, had given up what, after all, would have secured her a future and a husband she loved. There was some good in the girl, after all, and unconsciously he became more deferential in tone and manner.

"Forgive me," he said, "I was mistaken in you. I see now I blundered. I don't wonder that Roy fell in love with you. But," he added craftily, "it's really for his good that he marries as we have arranged. So, if he comes here, I have your word——"

"You have nothing," she answered coldly. "I have no bargain to make with you. I have told you the truth. As long as I think your son's welfare de-

mands his complying with your wishes, I shall continue to advise him to obey you. That is all."

"That is enough," said Mr. Marshall, preparing to go. "I feel reassured. Believe me, I shall not forget your kindness. Good-by."

He extended his hand, but she merely bowed, and in another instant the front door banged behind him.

Eunice returned to her class and once more became involved in the labyrinths of elementary arithmetic. Her pupils were particularly dull in this branch of study, and as a rule there was much scolding and weeping while the lesson was going on; but, to the surprise of the class, the utter stupidity of some of the girls passed to-day without reprimand. Eunice's thoughts were elsewhere as she propounded this weighty problem:

"If a tub of butter contains nine pounds to the cubic foot, how many pounds of butter would there be in a tub four feet high by three feet in circumference? Miss Jones, I'm speaking to you."

Miss Jones, a fat girl with red cheeks, looked worried. She bit her pencil nervously and glanced appealingly at her fellow-pupils, who affected the utmost contempt for the simplicity of the problem.

"If a tub of butter," stammered Miss Jones, who was more of an expert in boxes of caramels than tubs of butter, "contains nine pounds to the cubic foot—"

"Yes—yes," said Eunice wearily, "how many pounds would there be in a tub four feet high by three feet in circumference? Come, come, Miss Jones, you've done the same example dozens of times before."

Miss Jones was frantically scratching pencil calculations on her desk. One heard her muttering: "Nine pounds multiplied by seven equal to sixty-three." Triumphantly she cried, "Sixty-three pounds!"

The other girls giggled and Eunice herself had to laugh.

"Miss Jones," she said severely, "your arithmetic is getting worse and worse. You'll stay in after hours to figure it out, and mind you do better to-morrow."

Eunice dismissed the class, glad to be alone. Could what Mr. Marshall had told her be true? gone away from Alton Court, determined to seek her out and marry her! What would she say to him if he came? Her answer, she thought, must be the She would not let him ruin his career for her sake. Not that she was in the least influenced by what his father had said. She knew well that Mr. Marshall, senior, was considering only his own selfish interests and she had told him so to his face. But she herself felt that it was impossible. She was convinced that if she married Roy their union could only be productive of disappointment on his side and unhappiness on hers. Long before Mr. Marshall pleaded with her, therefore, she had made up her mind what was the right thing for her to do.

Yet, despite her stoicism, she could not help contrasting the utter hopelessness of her present existence with what it might be as Roy Marshall's wife. She closed her eyes in silent ecstasy as she pictured herself walking proudly at his side, clinging to his arm, envied by other women, secure in the knowledge that the loneliness and uncertainties of her past unhappy life were at an end and that a new life of hope and love lay bright with promise before her. Then her heart sank as she realized the folly of her day-dream. It could never be. Not only did she still shrink from the responsibility of taking an irrevocable step which he would be likely to regret later, but she was not even certain that he really loved her. possibly only an infatuation of the moment. presence at Alton Court had lured him from the path he himself had chosen and later he might hold her to blame. She could not incur the risk; she had acted wisely in refusing to listen to him. Yet she never ceased thinking of him and wondering why he did If he had left Alton Court, where could not come. he be all this time?

The days passed and still no word from Roy, and gradually Eunice became habituated to the idea that she would never see him again. But whether she did or not, he would always be a cherished memory

and their marriage an ideal to which she had once dared to lift her eyes as to the eternal stars, forever far beyond her reach. It never occurred to her to blame him. Perhaps, like herself, he shrank from inflicting upon himself unnecessary pain, having become convinced that his father was right and that his real interests lay in his marrying Lucy Merrick.

One afternoon about two weeks after the visit of Mr. Merrick. Sr., the classes were assembled in solemn session, the girls listening with no interest whatever to an exhaustive homily by Miss Sarah on the Importance of being a Perfect Lady. Eunice and the other two teachers were dissimulating their vawns as best they could, while Miss Martha, like some ferocious Japanese deity, sat on her throne at the end of the room, dominating the situation. Suddenly there was a terrific crash at the front door bell downstairs. Everybody started, Miss Sarah stopped short, Miss Martha frowned. The echoes of the first peal had not died away when there came another, even louder than before, as if the person without could not wait to gain admittance. A noise like that was such an outrage to the dignified traditions of the Academy that the Misses Pell looked at each other in blank amazement, even consternation. Was the house on fire? Miss Martha rose majestically from her throne and sailed out of the room to investigate. Her lips were compressed, her eyes flashed, and her corkscrew curls, sizzling under the electricity generated by her wrath, stood out at right angles. There was an ominous pause during which the pupils nudged each other. Presently Miss Martha returned. Her manner was glacial, her expression determined. Looking in the direction of Eunice, she called:

" Miss Vincent!"

Eunice went quickly forward with fast-beating pulse. Something told her that the visit so long expected had come at last. She knew only one arm that could pull the bell like that.

"Miss Vincent," said Miss Martha, fixing her young teacher with a glare intended to wither her. "I warned you a few days ago that I would not have men calling here to see my teachers. The person who had the impertinence to ring the bell in that brutal fashion has come to see you. Let me tell you that we do not care to have in the Academy teachers who have such acquaintances. I am sorry, Miss Vincent, but I must ask for your immediate resignation!"

"Very well, Miss Martha, I will leave when you wish."

But she scarcely knew what Miss Martha was saying. She only knew that Roy was downstairs waiting to see her. In another moment she was in the parlor facing him. Hearing her step he came forward, hands outstretched:

"Eunice!" he said gravely. "I have come for you."

Her slender little hand rested passively in his strong brown one. She made no attempt to withdraw it. Her eyes gazed lingeringly on his face. Yes, it was the same Roy, the same handsome, clean-shaven face, the same wavy hair and alert brown eyes, the same square shoulders capable, like Atlas, of supporting a world. She was so overcome with the suddenness of it all that she felt faint and dizzy. How she would like to rest her head on that shoulder and cry!

"I have come for you, Eunice," he said again.

He made no attempt to kiss the mouth that was so temptingly near his own. His manner was collected and serious, like that of a husband sure of his bride and the kisses that would come to-morrow. He addressed her by her first name quite naturally as if he had done so for years, as if he had the right.

She shook her head and smiled at him sadly:

"Where have you been all this time?" she asked. "I heard you left Alton Court the day I did."

"Where have I been?" he said. "Everywhere, fishing in Maine, tramping in Vermont, seeing 'life' in New York. I have been trying to forget you—seeking new places and new faces so I might banish you from my mind. But it was no good. I saw your dear face, I heard your sweet voice at every turn. No matter where I was, no matter what pleasures I ran

after, something seemed always missing—yourself. Finally I could bear it no longer and I came back. You see," he cried, "I have put myself to the test—can you still doubt that I love you?"

Ah, it was sweet to hear this from his lips! Yes, he loved her—there was no more doubt possible. But the situation remained the same. There was his future.

"I'm sorry," she said gently, "sorry for you, sorrier for myself. Ah, why need we conceal the truth any longer? I do love you. There is no greater honor or happiness I could wish for than to be your wife. It is because I love you that I wish to discourage you and urge you to return to Alton Court and all which that means to you. We must not only consider ourselves. If you had no ties, if circumstances had not already laid out a career for you, I would say: 'Yes, the whole world is before us. I entrust my life to your keeping.' But it would be a terrible thing to throw away this splendid opportunity of a partnership, with the wealth and social position which goes with it, to face the world practically penniless. We must be practical, you know," she said with a wistful smile, "no matter how much our hearts may ache. go back to Alton Court and forget me!"

"Forget you," he cried hotly, "I can never forget you. Can we forget the fragrance of the rose once we have smelled it? I can never forget you. I cannot

imagine a future for myself that does not include you. Eunice, if you have no pity for me—my happiness, have pity for yourself. What is your life here in this dreadful place—earning a mere pittance, not always sure of that? You are alone in the world. Give me the right to protect you. Let me be your companion, let me take the place in your heart of those you have lost."

He pleaded with the vibrating accents of his ardent young manhood. She stood silent and pensive. Why, after all, should she make this sacrifice? Would he really be happier with Lucy Merrick than with her? What were wealth and position compared with the loss of self-respect?

"Whether you marry me or not," he continued, "I shall go away. I am penniless, as you say, but I have two strong arms and a good head. I don't want a position which involves the sacrifice of my self-respect. Since I've met you I see things differently. Things appear in their real colors—I can distinguish the true from the false—the knave from the honest man. You have given me a new outlook on life. I could not go back and meet my father on the old footing. We should never agree. No, I shall go away—I don't know where—and make my own career as I can, where I can. With you to inspire me, with you at my side to help and encourage me, I feel capable of doing anything. Without your beneficent

influence, I don't know what will become of me. If I go to the devil it will be your fault! Eunice, for the last time, I ask you—will you be my wife?"

She looked grave, her face was pale, and her mouth trembled—from joy or dread, she did not know which. Then, slowly, she leaned forward and laid her hand on his shoulder.

Roy gave a glad, exultant cry, and clasped his arms passionately around her shrinking form.

"Are you quite sure you will never regret it?" she asked, looking up, smiling into his face. "Think well—before it is too late. Your happiness—my happiness depends upon it."

"I have thought well during all these days," he replied firmly, "and the answer has always been: Yes—yes." Then solemnly repeating the formula of the marriage service he said slowly: "I will love you, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part. My Eunice!"

His face bent down until his lips met hers and they lingered there in exquisite embrace



PART II NOON

"She is mine own

And I as rich in having such a jewel

As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,

The water nectar and the rocks pure gold."

—SHAKESPEARE.



CHAPTER I

HE stupendous city, the mammoth metropolis of the Western world, the modern Babylon! A monstrous octopus of steel and stone, its tentacles of railroads, subways and deep-water tunnels reaching out in every direction amid the deafening and continual roar of never-ceasing traffic. A bewildering and awe-inspiring spectacle of dynamic energy and human industry, fantastic buildings reaching the sky, colossal bridges thrown across mighty rivers, incredible engineering feats, crowning marvels of the steel age.

New York, the dumping ground of the earth's nations, the habitat of the American millionaire, the hunting-ground of the thug and the pickpocket, a vast encampment in brick and stone of nearly four million souls, white and black, good and bad, lawabiding and criminal, rich and poor, herded together in closest juxtaposition, in shameless contiguity, all eager in the pursuit of one object—the elusive dollar, and degraded to a common level in the universal greed for its possession, lying, cheating, stealing, killing in the race for quick wealth, the same passion moving palace and hovel, fashion jostling with rags, prudes patronizing prostitutes, spendthrifts hobnobbing with paupers in the mad lust for gold.

Here in the big town, in the whirling vortex of each day's insensate rush, jostled this way and that by the fast-moving, resistless, never-ending streams of panting, perspiring humanity, deafened by the ear-splitting crash of overhead trains, confused by the babel of strange tongues and the clash of half a dozen irreconcilable nationalities—Irish, Germans, Italians, Lithuanians, with only a sprinkling of native Americans—the bewildered stranger drifts along buffeted by the eddying currents of the cosmopolitan city, fascinated spectator of what we are pleased to call "life."

The luxurious splendors of Fifth Avenue and the sordid squalor of the Bowery; the resplendent glitter of the theatres and the sinister horrors of the Morgue: the gluttonous orgies of the fashionable restaurants and the heart-rending tragedies of the midnight "bread line"; the ostentatious extravagance of the over-rich and the silent suffering of the desperately poor; dyspeptic millionaires languidly toying with superabundance of rich foods in Delmonico's windows, watched across the street with wistful eyes by tattered tramps bent double with the pangs of hunger; the splendid sweep of the majestic Hudson and the noisome dangerous rookeries of Mulberry Bend and Chinatown; the famous Broadway with its miles of richly stocked shops, and the east and west shores lined with rotten, evil-smelling docks, infested with rats and river thieves; the imposing mausoleum on

Riverside, erected to the everlasting glory of America's greatest soldier, and the city's unnamed, unwept dead in Potter's field; the luxuriously appointed equipages of the few, and the filthy, indecently crowded street-cars provided for the many; the soul-satisfying quiet of St. Patrick's Cathedral and the feverish frenzy of Wall Street; the tawdry dance halls with their reckless pleasure-seekers and the gloomy graveyards with their weeping mourners; the humanitarian labors of the slum workers and the harmless, wellmeant fanaticism of the Salvation Army; the churning of ferry boats, the screaming of tugs and the deep blasts of ocean liners' sirens on the busy river ever rushing seaward; the terrific blasting of dynamite and the sweet cooing of new-born babes; the powers that prey and the powers that rule; boodle politicians, corrupt public servants, heroes and harlots, churches and brothels, drunkards and prohibitionists, preachers and gamblers, physicians and poisoners, accoucheurs and undertakers, burglars and policemen, college professors and illiterate immigrants, bankers, merchants, journalists, doctors, lawyers-all these children of men worked and played side by side in the great city -a strange, incongruous medley of saints and sinners -mostly sinners.

Three months have passed since that afternoon in the dingy parlor of the Misses Pells' Academy in Boston when Eunice threw herself into Roy's arms and entrusted her future into his keeping. She left the school the next morning, much to Miss Martha's secret chagrin, and they were married that same day in a little church in Isabella street where Eunice sometimes Her early religious training was Presbyattended. terian but she did not attend any church regularly. As long as she did what was right, she did not consider that it mattered much where one worshipped God—in cathedral, meeting-house or synagogue. Roy, who was a frank materialist, balked at the suggestion of a church ceremony, arguing that the civil contract was all that was necessary, but when Eunice said she would be more satisfied, he at once gave way.

He wrote to his mother telling her of the marriage, and also to his father informing him that he was leaving Boston with his wife. He expressed regret at being compelled to act in opposition to his wishes, but pointed out that he was his own master. He admitted that he owed his parents duty and respect, but he would be guilty of ignoble weakness if he acquiesced without protest in their attempt to dispose of his personal liberty in a manner which he could not reconcile with his manhood. He was going to make his own way in the world. His plans were at present unsettled, but he hoped to be able to write

soon giving glowing accounts of his success. To this letter he received no answer. But his mother wrote. She had wept many bitter tears over her headstrong boy's departure. She was somewhat comforted to hear that he was happy and she prayed that Eunice would make him a good wife. His father, she added, would never forgive him and had even forbidden his name to be mentioned at Alton Court. There also came a letter from Grace, written surreptitiously and addressed to them both, rejoicing in their marriage which thus brought to a happy conclusion a romance engendered in her girlish mind long before the possibility of it had occurred to either of those concerned.

Eunice, herself, was supremely happy. To her, it seemed like the dawn of a new life, the scattering of the lowering clouds after long years of poignant suf-She appeared transformed. Her former melancholy and seriousness of manner gave place to a playful cheerfulness, sprightly buoyancy, joyful high spirits. For the first time since he had known her, Roy heard her laugh heartily. He was delighted to see this new side of her character. Like most men, he was not given to being over-demonstrative, but every good impulse in him seemed to have been awakened by this union with the woman he loved and desired so ardently. He showed his devotion in a hundred ways, showering upon her all those trifling little attentions which every woman loves whether she

be a Hypatia or a Circe. One day he brought her fresh and odorous violets, her favorite flower, he laughingly insisting that they were symbolic of herself in their fragrant and aristocratic beauty. Then, drawing her to him, he kissed her lips and fondly caressed her hair:

"You have made a new man of me, Eunice," he murmured. "I owe my regeneration to you. I can never repay you. You are my God—my life! I adore you!"

With her eyes half closed, thrilled by the kiss which stirred the essence of their two beings, she listened to his words of tenderness.

"Roy," she said, "you have in you the making of a splendid future. The first step upward was your emancipation from the debasing shackles which bound you at home. So long as you were nothing to me, I had no right to advise you in opposition to your father's wishes, but now your interests are my interests, I can speak freely. You have done what a self-respecting man should do, and you will achieve great things because I feel, I know it is in you."

But in marriage there are matters to attend to more prosaic than love-making. Directly the minister had pronounced the words which made them man and wife it became necessary to face the situation they had created, and turn their steps toward the world they were to conquer. They had married practically on

nothing. It was absolutely necessary that Roy should decide at once what he was going to do. He had five hundred dollars, left to him some time ago by an aunt and which had been accumulating interest ever since in a Boston bank. This sum, together with the two or three hundred dollars saved by Eunice, constituted their entire fortune. To their youthful optimism, it seemed more than enough to last until Roy secured a good position. The next question was, what could he Like most young men just out of college, he had only the vaguest idea of what he was best fitted for. He knew a smattering of everything and was expert in nothing. In view of their critical financial situation all idea of taking up a profession was out of the question. He could not afford the time neces-He must earn money before their resources were exhausted.

Journalism appealed strongly to him as presenting many advantages. Firstly, no special qualifications were necessary; secondly, one could earn at least a living wage immediately; thirdly, college men had little difficulty in obtaining employment in editorial offices. Of course, he would have to begin as a reporter, but that was excellent training for a business career. It would bring him in contact with the world and in close touch with affairs. If he made a success of journalism, he might become an influential editor or even own a newspaper himself and so rise to be

a power in politics. Big salaries, he knew, were paid to clever men. Was not Hinton, editor of the New York Vulture, getting \$50,000 a year—more than the president of the United States? Yet Hinton was only a reporter when he started, and not yet forty years old. Salaries of \$20,000 and \$15,000 were to be picked up every day. Of course, Roy did not expect to limit himself to a mere \$20,000 a year, that was not his idea of what a clever man should be able to earn, but for a young man barely launched in life, it was a comfortable income. He had not the slightest doubt that after a few years' experience in newspaper work, his services would command at least that figure.

Eunice had little knowledge of these matters, but she agreed to everything, sharing all Roy's enthusiasm. She had heard that the newspaper business was a terribly hard one, with shockingly long hours, and wretchedly paid, but these unfavorable reports may have come from someone who had proved incompetent, and who would fail in everything. At any rate, it would mean a certain income at once, and if journalism did not enjoy the dignity of being considered a profession, it was at least a gentlemanly calling and a stepping-stone to authorship. Then arose the question where they would go. Neither of them wished to stay in Boston and so both hit simultaneously on the same place—New York. If Roy were to go into journalism it was better that he start in the metropolis.

So for Manhattan they started a few days after their marriage.

It seemed like home-coming to Eunice when they arrived at the Grand Central Station, and she beheld once more the familiar scene around the busy depotthe clanging street cars, the crowds of commuters hurrying to catch their trains, the entangled carriage traffic, the hoarse cries of the newspaper vendors. Her heart sank as she remembered the sad circumstances under which she had last been in that spot the day of her father's funeral. Again she saw the black highly polished hearse containing the body of the suicide, followed by the solitary carriage in which she and her grief-stricken mother were seated, the ride to Cypress Hills cemetery, through the pelting rain, the hurried service by the yawning grave and her mother's hysterical sobs. Instinctively, Eunice clung tighter to Roy's arm, trying to dismiss from her mind this nightmare of the past, determined to forget everything and think only of her new-found happiness.

They went to a place in West 57th Street where Roy had stopped on a previous visit. It was the typical New York boarding-house, the transient home of all sorts of queer people—crabbed old bachelors, disowned by their relatives, dapper shop clerks seeking social triumphs on \$15 a week, cranky virgins of forty who still entertained hopes, mysterious divorcées whose cases were always in the courts, theatrical

soubrettes taking a compulsory rest, long-haired littérateurs who wrote unacted plays, provincial visitors from out of town, seeing the big city for the first time. The house was old-fashioned and gloomy and its furnishings shabby and furniture rickety. There was an air of utter desolation in the bedrooms with their cheap and gaudy wall papers, gilt framed chromos, cracked toilet service and doubtful-looking beds. The staircase creaked ominously and the over-worked Irish slavey looked resigned to the worst that could possibly happen. It was not exactly a cheerful abode for a young bride, but Eunice philosophically reflected that it would not be for long. Roy would soon be in a position to afford something much nicer. They could take an apartment or even buy a house. On the \$20,000 a year he expected to earn one can live well, even in New York. Meantime they could well put up with little inconveniences.

As boarding establishments go, Mrs. Davis' house was by no means the worst of its kind. The table was not so bad that it was impossible—that is to say, there were fewer flies in the soup, more meat on the bones, and one could manage to see something on one's plate without the use of a microscope. The landlady herself, like most women of her class, was an interesting character. Of good family, she had inherited a little money, and, being left a widow, had bought the house as an investment and gone into

keeping boarders as a business. Incidentally, she "played" in Wall Street and could discuss the various brands of stock such as "Steel Common," "Amalgamated Coppers," "Northern Pacifics," "B.R.T.s," etc., as glibly as if describing the trimmings of a new bonnet. Mrs. Davis was also a walking encyclopædia and next to feeding her pet parrots-three fierce birds of which her boarders stood in mortal fear and which she let out of their cage when she thought her "guests" were lingering too long at the table-small gossip was her favorite pastime. Having lived in the city for nearly forty years, during thirty years of which she had "entertained" all sorts and conditions of people, she knew everything about everybody. On speaking terms with few of her neighbors, she was nevertheless acquainted with their affairs almost as well as they were themselves, and if given the slightest encouragement, would gladly furnish the family history of every person of prominence in town. But she had a kind. motherly heart and as she took a personal interest in the welfare of each of her boarders, was exceedingly popular with them all.

Eunice was pleased with everything like a child with a new toy. She clapped her hands at their cute little room, blushed becomingly when Mrs. Davis laid emphasis on it being the bridal chamber, and soon made herself popular with all the freak boarders in the dining-room. She had already won a place in the landlady's affections by alluding to her dreadful parrots as "those sweet birds."

In the evening Roy took his wife out to see the sights. They walked arm in arm down Broadway, which from Forty-fifth down to Twenty-third streets was a blinding blaze of electric lights, mostly elaborate illuminated signs, one glorifying a certain whiskey, another a safety razor, another a cathartic, still another a choice brand of champagne. The crowds pouring from restaurants and street cars, ignored the dark and deserted side streets and concentrated on the Great White Way, pushing and jostling, all intent on one object—an evening's amusement. The theatres, as thick as beer saloons, were all doing a rushing business.

"Look at that excitement!" exclaimed Eunice, clinging tighter to Roy's arm. "It must be a fight!"

A mob of well-dressed men and women, massed at the entrance of one of the larger playhouses, fought like frenzied maniacs, pushing, shouting, waving canes and umbrellas, in a frantic endeavor to reach the box office, while stalwart policemen flourished their clubs to preserve the line. The bill was a "hit" and all New York wanted to see the new play at the same time. The S.R.O. sign had been displayed long since.

"Orchestra seats! No more at the box office!" yelled a hangdog-looking speculator, shoving in Roy's

face his two fists, one filled with greenbacks, the other with tickets.

"How much?" demanded Roy, putting his hand in his pocket.

"Three dollars apiece and they're cheap at that," declared the man, a silent partner of the management. "Best show in twenty years. Best talent on the American stage—yes sir, siree!"

"No, Roy," objected Eunice, "it's too much. Six dollars! We can't afford it."

"Once is not every day," laughed Roy. "I feel like giving you a treat to-night, dear. Please let me have my way. The piece must be remarkable to draw such crowds."

He paid the blood money and they went in, prepared to see remarkable acting and wonderful scenic display. The theatre was one where Booth, Barrett, Irving, Bernhardt had trodden the boards, and Roy argued that the new production must be at least an attempt to keep up the artistic standard set by those great artists. But they were disappointed. The piece, mis-styled on the programme musical comedy, was the greatest rubbish imaginable, a mere hodgepodge of rough horse-play and idiotic fooling. What was original in the music was commonplace and what was tuneful was reminiscent. Of plot there was absolutely none, the inane situations and vacuous lines merely serving to introduce scantily draped young women,

while the star made his entrance on his head and later won howls of delightful applause by imitating a man afflicted with locomotor ataxia. There was not a witty line, not a pleasing song, nothing but the baldest trash possible. It seemed preposterous that the New York audiences would stand for such drivel.

"We've been buncoed," said Roy, turning to Eunice.

"Yes, it's dreadful," she yawned. "Let's go."

They returned to Fifty-seventh Street six dollars poorer in pocket, but considerably richer in experience. The next morning they discussed the matter with their immediate neighbors at table.

"Yes," said the long-haired gentleman who, according to the traditions of the house, had once been a dramatic critic himself, "the New York stage has gone to the dogs. The managers nowadays cater only to the 'bounder.' The dignified, literary drama is derided. Shakespeare they won't have at any price. The art of acting is dying out. The buffoon holds the centre of the stage. Soon there will be no more plays, no more actors. Public taste is completely degraded. I have written a play myself, a far better piece of work, I assure you, than anything produced during the past two seasons—and yet no manager will produce it. Some time when you have time, I will read it to you—what?"

Roy was so afraid that he might produce the MS.

and offer to read it on the spot, that he beat a hasty retreat from the dining-room, followed more leisurely by Eunice, who had to make an effort to control her laughter.

Roy now began to concern himself seriously about finding a position. He was still bent on journalism, and he wondered how best to set about it. Then he remembered Winchell, an old classmate of his at Yale who had recently entered the office of his father, a stock broker, in Wall Street. Yes, that was a capital idea. Winchell would surely know some one who could give him a letter to one of the newspapers. So he lost no time in going down to the famous street where the bulls and the bears rend the innocent lambs. Winchell was delighted to see him.

"Hallo, Marshall, who on earth would have expected to see you? What brought you to New York? I thought you were directing the affairs of Marshall & Company by this time."

Briefly, Roy explained the situation, his marriage, his quarrel with his father and his determination to fight his own way in the world. "I want to try journalism," he said. "Can you help me to get on one of the papers here?"

Winchell shook his head dubiously:

"Don't think of it, old man, it's a h-ll of a life, killing hours, little money and no future." Suddenly an

idea occurred to him and his face brightened. "I'll tell you what I'd do in your place."

"What?" queried Roy, rather crestfallen to find that Winchell threw cold water on his journalistic ambitions.

"Go to Pittsburg—the city of steel! Your knowledge of mechanics would make you a valuable man to any of the big ironmasters. The entire country is becoming steel-mad—there was never such a boom—fortunes are being made in a day. They need young men. Go to Pittsburg by all means. I'll give you a letter to Miller, manager of the Excelsior Steel Company. You'd have to start at the bottom, but there's the opportunity of a lifetime to the right man!"

But Roy shook his head. He knew, of course, that great fortunes were being made daily in the steel business, that the iron and steel industry in America had suddenly developed to sensational proportions, that the Excelsior Steel Company was performing prodigies, its plant running night and day to catch up with orders, astonishing the world with its output. That, indeed, was a business of giants! But, for the present at least, he had the journalistic bee in his bonnet and he was determined to give it a trial. If he did not like newspaper work then it would be time to go to Pittsburg.

Seeing that he could not convince his old chum that newspaper reporting was only a waste of time and energy, Winchell gave him a letter to the city editor of the Daily Owl.

"If you can't stand the racket, Marshall, old chap, come to me again and I'll give you a warm letter to Miller. He runs the Excelsior plant and would do anything for a friend of mine. Pittsburg is where your future lies, not in running errands for city editors."

Roy thanked his friend cordially and returned jubilant to Eunice, who was greatly interested to hear of Winchell's suggestion about the steel business. Certainly, she argued, steel making was likely to be more profitable than newspaper reporting, which for some time would only give them a livelihood, while there was no telling how rapidly a man might rise in the steel business. She argued, however, that he could try the newspaper life and if it proved uncongenial they could take advantage of Mr. Winchell's offer and go to Pittsburg.

So the next morning Roy presented himself with his letter at the offices of the *Daily Owl*. The city editor, like most of his class, was gruff as a bear and kept his visitor standing some minutes before he condescended to pay any attention to his visitor and read the letter. Then he said:

[&]quot;What can I do for you?"

[&]quot;I thought there might be a vacancy," ventured Roy.

"There are never any vacancies," snapped the editor.

"I'm a Yale man and I thought I'd like to try reporting."

The editor looked him over and blinked. It was just Roy's luck that one of the city force had reported sick that day, so they were short-handed.

"I'll give you a trial," he said at last. "Report here at two o'clock for general work. The salary is fifteen dollars a week."

Fifteen dollars a week!—the wage of a stenographer. Roy thought he must have misunderstood.

"How much did you say?" he asked.

"Fifteen a week. If you are any good you'll get more, and later you may be put on space."

This was a long way from the \$20,000 a year he had looked forward to, and he felt a little awkward about explaining his disappointment to Eunice. Certainly, they could not live on any such ridiculous sum. Their reserve fund was fast diminishing and unless he could make more than their expenses they would soon find themselves in difficulties. He recalled his father's words: "You won't find it so easy," and he winced at the uncomfortable thought that his sire had spoken prophetically, and that he might really have difficulty in making enough to keep Eunice comfortably. She should not teach again, he was determined on that, even if he had to work night and day to keep things

going. The only way was to try the newspaper business for a time and then, if he found he could not make enough, to give it up and go into something else.

On his way home he bought Eunice a bunch of violets. They were an expensive luxury, but he could not resist the temptation. He never saw violets without being reminded of his wife.

"You see, dear," he said as he kissed her, "it's not going to be so hard after all. I start on the Owl this afternoon. The salary at first is merely nominal, but I'll get more later on."

He spoke in an optimistic strain in order to encourage her, and incidentally to encourage himself.

"I hope you'll like it, Roy dear," she smiled cheerfully. Then tapping his forehead significantly she added, "But something tells me that journalism is not your true vocation."

CHAPTER II

HE hands of the great illuminated clock in the New York Owl building were approaching the hour of midnight. In a few minutes the colossal bronze figures dominating the entrance of the Venetian-like home of America's most successful newspaper would automatically strike the twelve ponderous, rich-toned notes announcing the completion of another day. On the streets the reverberating sounds of belated traffic, the shouting of carriage numbers by leather-lunged negro porters, the discordant cries of newsboys hawking night editions, the chatter and laughter of thousands of playgoers hurrying from empty theatres to home or restaurant, gradually quieted down to the occasional clatter of a solitary cab horse's hoofs and the imbecile jocularity of some intoxicated bounder. The lights along the Rialto were extinguished one by one, the great city sank into comparative peace and darkness. The keen December air was cold and penetrating. The wind was rising and flakes of snow were beginning to fall. Alone the Owl offices blazed with light and

Alone the Owl offices blazed with light and throbbed with dynamic energy. Here was no suggestion of sleep; from cellar to roof the place fairly

hummed with feverish activity. In the basement, towering from floor to ceiling, snorting, trembling, eager to start on their long daily run of five hundred thousand copies, were the giant printing presses, marvels of American invention and mechanical genius, possessed almost of human intelligence, doing everything in the making of the modern newspaper, except the actual news gathering, writing and typesetting, the entire journal of sixteen pages evolving readymade from a monster reel of blank white paperprinted, pasted, counted, folded, cut and delivered to the seller in the twinkling of an eve! The expert pressmen, appearing like pigmies beside the leviathans of steel, stood at their posts with military precision and discipline, their eyes anxiously watching the clock. awaiting the forms, so that the first edition might go to press on railroad time. They knew that a delay of a fraction of a minute might mean the missing of the early trains, which dread calamity, if traced to them, would result in someone losing his job.

Upstairs in the editorial offices an army of scribes were frantically feeding the monster. The long day of fourteen hours' hard toil was nearing its close. Tired editors and exhausted reporters were working like beavers in a frenzied effort to keep the fifty insatiate typesetting mechanics on the floor above supplied with "copy." The noise and seeming confusion was bewildering. Telephone bells were ringing fu-

riously, editors were shouting for boys, cheeky messengers were running in and out, a dozen typewriters were clicking feverishly. From the telegraph room across the hall came the familiar sound of the sharp metallic tic-tic of the Morse code, twenty expert operators receiving on as many instruments despatches from all over the world.

In the big city room, thirty men were sitting in their shirt sleeves at small desks arranged in cross rows as in school, scribbling as for dear life. These were reporters just in from their respective "stories," and each in a class by himself. There were the special assignment men, the political reporter-a very important, self-satisfied person, decidedly chesty, who enjoyed the privilege of being on speaking terms with the managing editor—the ship news reporter, and the real estate reporter. Then came the men on general work who, in turn, divided themselves into classesthe men who got the fat assignments, such as juicy murder cases or mysterious disappearances, items of great popular interest which enabled them to run their space bills up to \$100 a week and more, down to the humble cub reporter, fresh from college, learning the business, and glad to get such crumbs as fell from the city editor's table. All these men "covered" the important local news-murders, fires, riots, accidents, arrests, mass meetings, etc., etc. Other local news of a special nature, such as sports, theatres, finance, society,

was handled by special experts who had rooms and assistants in private offices on either side of the long passage leading to the main entrance. There also was the room of the foreign editor, who, with two assistants, wrestled with cable despatches from foreign countries, including freak specials on dog shows in London, auction sales in Paris and premature burial on the Riviera. Here, too, was the sanctum of the weather expert who had been a marked man ever since 1888 when, for the day of the great blizzard—the worst storm that ever struck Manhattan—he made the Daily Owl predict a "bright sunny day for New York City and vicinity!"

All the editors were driving their assistants to utmost speed—"head" writing, blue pencilling, pasting—in the mad race to beat the clock, for at midnight to the minute they were all due upstairs at the "makeup" slabs, to face the grim night editor who had little mercy for laggards.

"Copy! Copy!" came cries from every corner of the building, and the urchins employed for that purpose flew here and there, collecting packages of edited manuscript which was stuffed into the "copy" elevator and whisked up to the composing room above where it was hastily cut up into small "takes" for the machine operators. This was the only hour of the night when the "copy" boy was known to exert himself, except perhaps at ten o'clock when

he received generous tips from the staff for foraging for sandwiches at a neighboring hash house.

In one corner of the large city room, twelve men were sitting at a long table spread over with sheets of white paper. They were in their shirt sleeves and most of them wore green shades to protect their eyes from the powerful electric drop lights. Before each man was a batch of "copy"—reporters' manuscript, Associated Press reports and telegraph despatcheswhich must be put in shape with the aid of scissors, paste and blue pencil. These men were editors, but as that title gave too much dignity to their position they were called "copy readers." They were the galley slaves of journalism, overworked and underpaid, and despised by their natural enemy, the reporter, who insisted that they ruthlessly blue-pencilled his brightest They looked weary and they thoughts. working steadily had been o'clock without a let-up, wrestling with villainous "copy," and they would be kept at it until 2.30 when the Associated Press sent the "Good Night" over the wire. But no matter how he is overworked, no matter what injustices he suffers at the hands of a conscienceless employer and subordinate petty taskmasters, a newspaper man is always loyal and will suffer inconvenience, endure hardship and even incur personal danger to serve some benefit to his paper-a merciless, soulless Juggernaut which grinds out its immense

profits yearly, ignoring the very existence of the man who serves it so faithfully, ready to drop him the instant when, his life worn out in its service, he has ceased to be as active as younger men. In this respect the newspaper man resembles the soldier in the field, never questioning the order of his superior, ever prompt to do his duty no matter at what personal risk or sacrifice of personal comfort. All honor to the conscientious, hard-working, anonymous newspaper man!

The editor in charge of the desk watched his men keenly. Every nerve in him was stretched to snapping point, but he was outwardly unperturbed. man in his position who gets excited or "rattled" is no good at the head of a "copy" desk, where, at the busiest hour, the pace is simply terrific. dozen big "stories" were running. News had broken loose in half a dozen different directions. The night editor, suddenly confronted with the problem of squeezing fifty columns into a paper affording room only for thirty, had torn the schedule to pieces and demoralized all departments by suddenly ordering "stories" cut down, old "heads" changed and new ones written. The "copy" readers were doing their best to obey contradictory orders, the man in charge goading them on on like a jockey touching a racer with the whip: "Got that head ready, Brown?", "Finished that story, Jones?", "Sent your introduction up, Smith?", "Here, Robinson, rush this a page

at a time!" and similar little ticklers that are apt to get on a man's nerves.

But if things were kept humming on the editorial floor, they fairly sizzled upstairs, where they were rushing the forms to press. Here the night editor, a burly Irishman with dishevelled hair, a peppery temper and a cob pipe, was King. The heat, glare and din made of the place an Inferno. Fifty composing machines were racing at full speed, eating up "copy," the noise of the type moulds falling into the matrices sounding like a continuous heavy rain of molten metal. Compositors, make-up men, printer's devils rushed excitedly about getting in each other's way, snatching hot type from the machine operators and then hurrying with it to the "make-up" slabs, where anxious editors were waiting to make up their respective pages. night editor, his hair bristling on end, like a cat suddenly scared by a cur and with perspiration literally streaming down his face from a sheer sense of his weighty responsibility, kept his anxious eye on the fast speeding hands of the unconcerned clock while his profane tongue lashed the hustling printers. forms for the first edition must go down on schedule time, even if hell broke loose, as indeed often happened. So the type, still hot, was hurriedly thrown in and the pages quickly locked, while the night editor and composing room superintendent, a pair in thorough sympathy with each other, paced the floor growling and snarling. Finally, the last form got away—and the night editor, wiping the sweat from his brow, and with an armful of rough proofs, went downstairs to quarrel with the various editors over the unnecessary space their "stuff" had taken up. The forms, rapidly cast in circular shape from a soft matrix, reached the pressroom in the basement a few moments later. They were slipped on to the mighty cylinders, the pressman pulled a lever and the steel monster started on its tremendous run, spitting out at the incredible speed of a hundred copies a minute, finished newspapers, ready to be sold on the streets.

Thus the paper was born. The day's happenings all over the globe, civilized and savage, disasters on sea and land, foreign and domestic politics, the clash of armies and the movements of fleets, the encyclicals of Popes and the messages of Presidents and Kings, reports of stock markets, economic troubles, strikes, riots, murders, embezzlements, railroad accidents, triumphs in science and art, arctic explorations, storms, convulsions of nature, the latest doings in society, literature, the drama, music, births, marriages and deaths—this and more, the world-history of the hour, was gathered all over the earth at a fabulous outlay of money, at the cost of great physical endurance, sometimes at the price of life itself, and given to the American public each morning for the contemptible

sum of one cent—a price less than the actual cost of the blank paper!

Utterly exhausted as he was after his first day's experience as reporter on a metropolitan newspaper, Roy was delighted and fascinated by everything he saw, and as he stood there in the city room, a silent spectator of the busy scene around him, preparing to go home to Eunice, he congratulated himself on being a part, if only an insignificant one, of so tremendous a machine. The power of the press! A power, he reflected, sometimes abused, but on the whole exercised for good rather than for evil. The world, undoubtedly, was the better off for the modern newspaper. The general tone of the American press was sane, strong and honest. The American newspapers which counted and which were a credit to the country had nothing in common with the new yellow journalism, sprung up mushroom-wise in a night and like some foul, luxuriant growth attempting to throttle the sturdy vine, poisoning the mind of the nationdealing in muck, revelling in crime, preaching anarchy, raking up nauseating scandal. Such papers, a growing and dangerous influence among the lower classes. were a burning disgrace to American civilization. The trouble with many papers, even decent papers-

was that they were merely business enterprises, conducted with the sole object of making money, not hesitating to print advertisements of fraudulent quacks, turf sharps, financial swindlers, moral lepers, in order to increase their profits. The ideal would be an endowed newspaper-altruistic and non-partisan, conducted in the best interests of the nation—a paper which would present all the news worth printing in a clean, dignified way, which would consider an important discovery in science worth more space than a prize fight, which would be strong editorially, neither flippant nor facetious, possessed of the courage to flay and expose rascality, and the fair-mindedness to encourage merit, and which in its comment on public affairs and in its criticisms of art. literature and drama could speak with the wisdom of a sage and the authority of an expert. Such a paper, thought Roy, would count its readers by the millions!

Roy had reported for duty early that afternoon and after sitting around idly for nearly two hours he had been called to the city's editor's desk and given a small assignment. A prominent financier had presented the Metropolitan Museum of Art with some valuable objets d'art and he was told to go and get the story. He felt rather nervous about it. He did not like to say that he did not know where to go, but the city editor sized him up for a greenhorn: "Go up to the museum

and ask for Mr. Chester. He'll fix you," he said laconically.

So Roy, considerably impressed with the importance of his mission, took the "L" train uptown. He wondered if the people in the car took him for a reporter and he glanced furtively in a mirror to see if he would recognize himself as one. Then he worried about the story. Even if this Mr. Chester told him the story, would he be able to write an intelligent account of it? He felt that his whole journalistic career depended on this interview with Mr. Chester. Then he thought of Eunice. He felt sorry he had to leave her alone, and he wondered what she was doing, and what time he could get back to her. He had a vague idea that he would not get back to the boarding-house for dinner. He was practically on duty till midnight. Dinners, a fellow reporter told him, were supposed to be eaten while on assignments. This was a bad beginning, but he could not expect to enjoy the usual home comforts when engaged in such strenuous work as journalism.

When he got to the museum he found other reporters had arrived before him. They, also, quickly scented a greenhorn, and seemed to hold aloof disdainfully. But Mr. Chester, an affable, loquacious old gentleman, did not care whether a man was a greenhorn or a veteran so long as he, Chester, got his name in the paper, so he received the representative of the Owl with open arms, showed him the objets d'art.

wonderful specimens of antique worked gold, and filled Roy up to the neck with an erudite description of them. Fearing he would forget, Roy wrote everything down, seeing which his journalistic colleagues snickered. But when Roy looked up, angry enough to jump up and thump them, they pretended to be vastly interested in Mr. Chester's remarkable collection. Roy returned to the Owl office and for the rest of the afternoon laboriously prepared his "copy." When he had finished, it was half-past six. He took it up to the desk, half hoping that the city editor would pass on it there and then, but that cynical person threw it indifferently on to a heap of other manuscripts, and taking a card from his desk held it out to Roy saying: "Here, Marshall, there's a Jury dinner at Delmon-

"Here, Marshall, there's a Jury dinner at Delmonico's to-night. Get all the names you can. Keep the speeches down. Begins at seven sharp."

Roy took the card, feeling rather crestfallen. He had secretly hoped he would get a chance to run home, if only for a minute, to see Eunice, but that was plainly impossible. He was hungry, too. He wondered if the invitation to the banquet included a seat at the tables. But he was not dressed. That was hardly probable. Anyhow, he did not care. It would be a novel experience. He was learning the business. When he got to Delmonico's the dinner had already started, and late arrivals were hurrying to their seats. A head waiter, a corpulent, imposing person with side

whiskers, judging by the absence of dress suit that Roy was a reporter, pointed to a corner near the speaker's table where a table had been set aside for the use of the press.

There was no indication that there would be anything more toothsome to digest than words, but the dinner committee had thoughtfully provided cigars and a quart bottle of champagne. It was not their fault if the reporters had been sent to cover the story on an empty stomach; they had other things to worry about, not the least important among which was the eating of their own dinner. While the banquet was in progress and while waiting for the speeches Roy employed his time making lists of those present. was, of course, a dinner chart which some reporters copied blindly, not taking the trouble to find out if the persons named were actually present. Roy saw the absurdity of this, and it at once explained to him why he had often seen mentioned among those present men who he knew were not there at all. Yet, simple as it seemed, it was really difficult to make an accurate list. Unless one knew personally by sight everybody there, it was practically impossible, and Roy, not being a New Yorker, knew nobody by sight. He had, therefore, to either depend on the other newspaper men, who, seeing he was a newcomer, were rather inclined to snub him, or to keep bothering the dinner committee with questions. The police commissioner was there,

the district attorney and other officials with whose personal appearance Roy was familiar, but even when he heard some of the other men's names he did not know which were big enough to mention and which he could afford to ignore. So he got all he could, thinking rightly that the copy reader would blue-pencil those he did not want.

Roy was surprised to note that he was the only one among the reporters who was working. His colleagues were smoking, drinking and cracking jokes. The solitary bottle of champagne had been succeeded by half a dozen others. They were old hands and this sort of an assignment was child's play to them. They considered it a snap. They knew almost every man who came in and greeted them by their first name. Hello, Dick? How do, Tom? and so on, until Roy envied them. With the serving of the coffee the speeches began, and Roy worked himself into a fresh perspiration with the tyro's fear that he might fail to record some remark in the orator's speech which was of vital interest to the whole nation. So he wrote and wrote until he had covered fifty sheets of copy paper. When he stopped from sheer exhaustion he saw his colleagues still cracking jokes and finishing what little was left of the champagne. He wondered what they had come for, what their papers would do without the speeches. He did not then know that a speech is written afterwards in the office, on a few key words furnished by the speaker, and which it suffices to jot down on one's cuff. What a man really says amounts to very little, but he takes several thousand words to say it in. After the principal speakers had got through, the reporters broke camp and Roy returned to the *Owl* office about 11 o'clock just when the night's rush was beginning. He went to the night desk to report:

"I was out on the dinner at Delmonico's," he said timidly.

"Anything doing?" inquired the editor without looking up.

"Yes—that is—several speeches. The police commissioner spoke. He said——"

"Boil it down to half a column and rush it. Here's the A. P. on it," he added handing over the Associated Press flimsy.

Glancing at it, Roy understood now why his colleagues at the table had paid so little attention to the proceedings. The A. P. had covered the affair completely. All the other papers had to do was to paste the flimsy on their "copy." They were sent up to Delmonico's only to give an original twist to the story, so each paper would not read exactly alike. But even with the aid of the A. P., it was close on midnight when Roy had his story in, and the night editor growled something about his being to blame if it failed to catch the first edition. Then Roy waited round until the paper came down, anxious to see his stories in

print and take them home in triumph to Eunice, who would sit up in bed and express admiring wonder at his cleverness.

Theoretically, he was now through for the day. That is to say, he was entitled to get "Goodnight" from the desk to go home. But in practice, a newspaper man is never through as long as he hangs round a newspaper office. Roy soon learned this to his cost. He was putting on his coat when the night city editor called him.

" Marshall!"

"Yes, sir," he answered, stepping up to the desk.

The editor saw Roy was about to go home. He knew he was a novice and probably tired out. But the newspaper editor never lets such a thing as consideration for an individual stand in the way of his duty to the office. If he does not consider himself, why should he consider others? So his face was expressionless and unsympathetic as he said:

"I'm short-handed to-night. A man has just dropped dead in Brooklyn. He is one of the biggest men in the woollen trade. Jump over there and see the family. The coroner's end we'll get from police headquarters. His name is Jones. They live 16 Peacock Street. Telephone the story in directly you get it, and hustle! If you're quick we'll catch the last edition."

Roy was speechless. He could scarcely believe his

He had been working without a break since two o'clock without a thing to eat except a sandwich hastily devoured on the way to Delmonico's. He was thoroughly exhausted and ready to drop with sleep and now they wanted him to go over to Brooklyn and dig up a coroner case. Brooklyn of all places on earth! He had never been there, but he had heard of its terrors, bewildering maze of tortuous streets, crooked trolley lines, countless churches and crowded cemeteries. The editor talked cheerfully of his jumping over there as if Brooklyn were on the other side of the street. It was a good hour's journey. By the time he had found the house and aroused the family it would be half-past one. How on earth could he get back in time with the story to catch the last edition which went to press at two o'clock? Oh, yes, he forgot he was to telephone it in. Well, there was no use rebelling; it would be a nice thing if he mutinied the very first day. So all he said was:

"All right, sir,"

And he went wearily out into the night.

It was very cold with a biting northeast wind and the snow was coming down thick. The weather conditions were anything but favorable for a trip across the big bridge, but Roy buttoned up his coat, clinched his teeth and made for the nearest "L" station. Although dead tired and hungry as a wolf, he was more worried about Eunice than about himself. He

knew she would be anxious, probably sitting up for him, wondering why he didn't come, fearing all kinds of things. He rode downtown and got off at Park Place, intending to cut across City Hall Park and take a trolley across the Bridge. This, he knew vaguely, was the conventional way to Brooklyn. there, he must trust to luck to thread his way through the labyrinth to Peacock street. He cursed Jones for dropping dead and wished he had never been born. He stopped for a couple of minutes at a lunch counter to swallow a cup of coffee, and soon afterwards found himself at the Bridge entrance. He asked an inspector what car he should take for Peacock street, but the man shook his head. He had never heard of such a street. The best thing he could do was to take the first car that came along and then inquire again when in Finally after changing cars about half a Brooklyn. dozen times and taxing the wits of four times that number of Brooklynites, Roy entered Peacock street, just as the clock in a neighboring church chimed the lonely hour of one.

He had no time to lose. The snow was coming down thicker all the time. If the cars got tied up, he would not be able to get back at all, and then Eunice would be seriously alarmed. After much groping in the dark he finally located the house, which was all in darkness. He struck a match to make sure. Yes, there was the sinister crape bow on the door. He dis-

liked to ring the bell and disturb people at such an hour and for a moment he hesitated. Suppose he went back to the office and said he had rung but no one answered? His conscience told him it would not be true. He would not begin his journalistic career with a lie. He had a duty to perform and, unpleasant as it was, he would do it. He rang. A dog barked. Roy winced. He was sorry there was a dog. The beast might take him for a burglar and spring at him. sounded like a vicious dog. Once more he felt like beating an inglorious retreat, then he thought how he would feel if the other papers had obituaries of Jones and his paper hadn't-through his fault, his cowardice! Again he braced up courage and rang a second time. The dog barked furiously, leaping up inside, eager to be at this nocturnal intruder who disturbed its canine rest. Presently a head appeared at a window on the first floor and asked in a sleepy voice.

"Who's there?"

Roy stepped back and looked up.

"Reporter from the Owl," he answered. "I want—"

"Go to h-ll!" answered the voice and the window slammed to again.

Here was an unforeseen dénouement. Did the voice mean that he should go to a certain warm climate to find out all about the defunct Jones, or was that merely a picturesque figure of speech to express indignation at being disturbed? Then Roy began to get angry. The public was interested in Jones, was entitled to know how and why Jones had gone on before, and it was the duty of the surviving, if not sorrowing relatives to gratify this public curiosity. The man at the window was simply too lazy to come down. He would ring again and perhaps some one else would come.

The wind was rising to the proportions of a blizzard, the ground was now thick with snow, the air was cutting. Roy was stiff with cold. He rang again, savagely, recklessly.

The dog grew frantic. Once more the window upstairs was thrown up and the voice cried wrathfully.

"What do you mean by ringing that bell? You'd better quit and go or I'll have you locked up."

"I'm from the Owl," protested Roy meekly. "I came for——"

"I don't care a d—n what you came for," cried the voice. "It's an outrage to be ringing decent folk out of their sleep at this time of night. Get along with you!" saying which he again slammed the window, while the dog howled with chagrin because he could not reach the reporter's calves.

Roy stood transfixed. He was not going to get anything there, that was very evident. What was the matter with him? Was he a failure as a newspaper man after all? Could other men get these things when he failed?

If he had been a little longer in the business he would have been familiar with the reportorial trick that is usually used to meet this situation. When the person whose peace has been thus rudely disturbed refuses to talk, the world-wise reporter says:

- "It's true then?"
- "What's true?" growls the unsuspecting relative.
- "That Brown committed suicide."
- "What!" cries the relative.
- "That's the story which reached our office," says the reporter calmly. "We thought you'd like to deny it."

The scheme works like a charm. The relative rushes downstairs, opens the door and tells the reporter all the facts he wanted to know. Of course, the suicide existed only in the imagination of the reporter, who secures without further ado the story he was after.

But Roy was not familiar with this trick. He only knew he had failed and his heart quailed as he saw a mental picture of the Owl office—that uncompromising-looking editor awaiting his return, accepting no excuses, demanding only results, the presses stopped, awaiting his article that didn't come! Good God!—not getting the Jones obituary might mean an enormous loss to the circulation—even the ruin of the

paper! Cold as it was, he broke out with a cold perspiration at the very thought! The only way now was to get to the nearest telephone, call up the office and ask for further instructions. But where could he find a telephone at that hour in the wilderness? He looked around. Coming down the other side of the street was a policeman swinging his night stick and eyeing him suspiciously. Roy welcomed the officer of the law as a long-lost friend. Going up to him he said:

"Officer, I'm a reporter and I must get a telephone at once. Can you tell me where there is one?"

The man chuckled at the absurdity of the question.

"Telephone! yer won't find a place open from here to the Bridge. If you've got a story you'd better beat it. It's goin' to come down somethin' fierce."

He walked on, leaving Roy floundering in the everdeepening drifts of snow, and as puzzled as ever. But there was no use staying there, so he set out for the Bridge, following the trolley tracks where the walking was easier, as one follows a thread out of a labyrinth, and before long he came to a saloon. It was closed, but through the window he saw the proprietor counting up the night's receipts. He tapped at the window to attract his attention. The man looked up and thinking it was a holdup, he hastily closed the money drawer and drew a revolver from his pocket. Roy shouted to him through the glass: "I want to use the telephone."

"Get along," said the publican, "I'm closed for the night."

Roy held up half a dollar.

"This is yours," he said, "if you'll let me 'phone my paper. I'm a reporter."

The publican could not resist the half dollar, so he unfastened the door and in another minute Roy had the Owl office on the wire.

"Hallo! Hallo! Owl office? Give me the night city desk."

A pause.

"Hallo! Is that you, Mr. Gillis? This is Marshall. I'm over here in Brooklyn. Couldn't get anything about Jones. They refused to open the door. Told me to go to h—ll."

The reply that came over the wire sounded to the saloon keeper like the crackling of Chinese fire-crackers. The only word Roy could make out was: "Rats!" Then they rang off.

He felt they were dissatisfied with his efforts, and his heart sank. This time he was completely discouraged. But he gave the saloon man the promised half dollar and once more braved the storm. It was no use returning to the office, so he decided to go straight home.

Owing to a tie-up on the bridge caused by the snow, it was nearly three o'clock when he reached the

boarding-house, and as he floundered through the drifts to reach the stoop, he caught sight of Eunice, a solitary figure in white anxiously watching for him, frightened almost to death.

"Roy, Roy!" she greeted him with hysterical joy, "where have you been? I thought I'd never see you again!"

"Out for the paper, of course," he answered, and swallowing greedily the glass of whiskey and soda she poured out for him.

"Tell me all about it," she said. "How do you like reporting?"

"Oh, it's bully!"

He had not the strength to say any more. He threw himself on the bed and slept like a log until one o'clock next day, when he awoke with a start, and rushed back to the *Owl* office to report for another trick of fourteen hours!

CHAPTER III

HE cold, uncomfortable days of snow and sleet passed quickly by and once more balmy Spring sat in the lap of grim Winter. The nipping frosts and damp fogs had disappeared and again the trees and verdure in Central Park and other oases of the big city put on their attractive mantle of soothing, refreshing green.

Roy was still engaged in the impossible task of trying to carve a fortune out of journalism, but he had never succeeded in doing more than make both ends meet. He had left the *Owl* some time ago, under circumstances which he considered most unjust, and was now on the reportorial staff of the *Vulture*, one of the more sensational dailies.

By this time he had not many illusions left about metropolitan journalism. He quickly discovered that it was no profession at all, but rather a hand-to-mouth bohemian kind of calling which anybody could take to, and for which no special qualifications were necessary. Unlike the law, medicine, surgery, architecture, engineering and other legitimate professions, which assured a fine competency for a man who practised them successfully, journalism assured nothing. When

the journalist, grown old in harness, worn out, exhausted, ceased to be as active as younger men, he was quickly supplanted and left to starve. His years of brilliant service went for nothing. He had nothing to show for his work. The lawyer had his established clientèle, the doctor his patients, who would be faithful to him till he died, the author had many books earning royalties, but the journalist had nothing but the realization of a wasted life.

Eunice was long ago convinced that Roy was using up his energy uselessly and without possibility of reward. The wife's instinct worked quicker and more accurately in this instance than the man's. She never stopped urging him to give up this newspaper life which was making her existence even more lonely than it was before marriage. Then, at least, she had an occupation. She was teaching and the time did not hang so heavily on her hands as it did now, immured in the not very exhilarating atmosphere of Mrs. Davis' boarding-house. There was nobody in the house whom she cared to associate with-at most she was on speaking terms with the boarders at the table -and so for the greater part of the day she sat alone in their small room, sewing, reading or writing, looking forward to the evening when Roy would stay a few minutes at home. Otherwise, he was always on the go and out every night on assignments. Once a week he had an evening off, and to these red letter nights Eunice looked eagerly forward. They would celebrate the occasion by dining out, patronizing one of the numerous cheap Italian restaurants where a bad dinner of queer dishes, disguised under high-sounding foreign names and washed down by execrable Chianti, could be had for half a dollar. But to Eunice, emancipated for the moment from the drab commonplaceness of the boarding-house, it seemed like a Delmonico banquet, and it did Roy good to see her rather pale and mournful face light up, and listen to her sensible advice and cheerful plans for the future.

Roy was still smarting under the injustice of his dismissal from the Owl. He had been called one day to the editor's room and asked to get up a special feature for the Sunday paper. The feature had been ordered by the editor, and as he would receive extra pay for it Roy gladly consented. story was about a certain British nobleman who had recently been expelled from his London clubs. story, as it appeared, was in no sense libellous, being founded strictly on facts already published, but unfortunately the said nobleman happened to be a close friend of the proprietor of the Owl. The latter was incensed at the publication of the story and ordered the instant dismissal of the man who had written it. Roy was therefore notified that his services were no longer required. He protested that he had only car-

ried out orders received from his superior, but his protests were unheeded and he was discharged, while the editor, whose fertile brain had conceived the story and who had ordered it written, remained safely under cover. This, he heard later, was only one of a thousand petty injustices done in newspaper offices, and the millionaire proprietors, living far away from the scene of action, were often not to blame, the facts having been misrepresented to them.

Eunice was very indignant and used strong arguments in favor of her husband giving up newspaper work altogether. The work was killing: his health would suffer sooner or later. She still remembered what Mr. Winchell had said about Pittsburg, and the roseate colors in which he had painted the opportunities there awaiting energetic young men. It seemed only logical that there must be greater opportunity in a vast enterprise like the steel business than in running round for city editors like a superior kind of messenger boy. Certainly they must decide on something. Their funds were getting alarmingly low. What Roy had been earning had not quite covered expenses and their wardrobes needed replenishing. Although she and Roy avoided the subject, they both knew that the spectre of poverty was looking them in the face. Eunice went about with only a few pennies in her purse, and Roy himself was experiencing something he had heretofore never known in his life-the necessity of turning a quarter over several times before deciding to spend it.

There was still another cause to give Eunice concern regarding the future and the necessity of providing for emergencies. And this cause, at the same time, stirred her breast with the inexpressible pride and joy the young wife feels when she first realizes that she is about to accomplish the highest purpose of her womanhood. For some weeks it had gradually dawned upon her that she was enceinte. At first the knowledge of her condition had stunned her and then, when doubt was no longer possible, she was filled with awe. Was it possible that in her poor insignificant body the mystery of life was already unfolding? She did not stop to reflect that Nature acts blindly, resistlessly, and that conception and birth was an identical process amid the splendors of royal palace or the unspeakable horrors of the slums. She was only grateful that Providence had granted her the blessing of a child. She had longed for maternity, having nothing but contempt for those women-negligent of their duty to the State, selfish of their own comfort-who wilfully evade the responsibilities of motherhood. What greater joy, thought Eunice, than to hear the cooing of a new-born babe, to see its first dimpled smile of recognition and know it is your own! Under the weight of the impending responsibility, she grew more sedate, more pensive, as becomes the young matron conscious of her dignity, and a new light shone in her eyes which until now had smiled only for her husband. She was to taste a holier joy than mere carnal passion. She was to experience the exquisite delight of nursing her own child at her breast.

When, with womanly confusion and modesty, she first revealed the news to Roy, his face beamed with satisfaction and pride. He—a father! Just think of it! How pleased his mother would be and Grace! He insisted on rushing off at once to send them a telegram, only Eunice restrained him, saying that it was a little premature. Clasping his wife to him in an enthusiastic embrace intended to be tender, but which from sheer excitement was exceedingly rough, he said:

"God bless and preserve you, little wife! I only ask that our offspring resemble you—that it have your virtues, your intelligence, your goodness of heart. You have indeed told me good news. It was the one thing lacking to complete our happiness."

She smiled at him and then said gravely:

"But it isn't only joy, you know. When baby comes we must be prepared. It will mean a lot of expense and we are very short already. Something must be done. Don't you think I'd better find some pupils? That will help."

He was on his feet in a moment, his eyes flashing.

"Eunice—if you love me, don't say that again.

Don't drive me desperate. I won't hear of you teaching or doing anything else. You are my wife and if I can't afford to support you, why—I'll go and drown myself and you can marry someone else."

Eunice had already put her arms round his neck trying to pacify him.

"Hush, Roy," she said reprovingly. "It's wicked of you to talk like that, especially after what I told you. Of course if you don't wish it, I won't teach, only our savings are fast coming to an end and—"

"Yes, dear, I know—I know. Something must be done. I must earn more money or else we must go somewhere where it costs less to live. I'm about through with this miserable newspaper life. I think I'll go down and see Winchell again and see what can be done about that Pittsburg proposition. Don't worry, little one," he said, kissing her. "I'll take care of you and baby."

He rushed out and downtown for the daily grind, while she stayed at home making cute little garments for the expected arrival. At the *Vulture* office Roy found an assignment awaiting him.

"Here, Marshall," said the city editor, "there's a deuce of a row over at the Brotherly Love. Patient killed by a nurse. It sounds like a good story. Work it up for all it's worth."

Everything that suggests murder, crime, or violence of any description is "a good story" to a city editor.

He would rather have a good murder on his hands than a good dinner.

Roy snatched a handful of "copy" paper from a desk and went out. On the ride uptown he met a man he knew—Joe Blake, a reporter on the Scorpion, bound on the same mission. He was white-haired, with a wizened face—the face of a man prematurely old. He had been reporting for twenty years and was to-day as far advanced as when he began nearly a quarter of a century ago.

- "Well, Marshall," inquired his friend, "how do you like the *Vulture* office after the *Owl?*"
- "Oh," replied Roy in a disgusted tone, "I guess it's a case of frying pan into the fire. I've a good mind to chuck it, and get into something else."
- "I don't blame you," said Blake sympathizingly. "I've been going to quit for years, but the trouble is I've been in it so long I'm good for nothing else. Just imagine—I've been a reporter for twenty years, and actually I'm getting less to-day than I did when I began. I'm not so young as I was, so they don't give me the best assignments. That's how a newspaper rewards a man for getting old in its service. But talking of heartless employers, did you hear about Mills, copy reader on the Scorpion?"
 - "No, what was it?" asked Roy, interested.
- "Why, the most cold-blooded throwdown I ever heard. Mills has been on the Scorpion for twenty-five

years. He began as a boy and to-day his hair is whiter than mine, and his face furrowed with wrinkles. Twenty-five years, just think of it! In all that time he has worked like a horse and been a useful man, yet now old age is approaching and he needs money most, his salary is cut down \$10 a week less. Five years ago he was getting \$45. Now he is getting \$35. Why? Search me. It's simply an inexplicable whim of a newspaper owner who boasts of being in close touch with his office although 3,000 miles away, whereas, as a matter of fact, he has no idea of the injustices done in his name."

"But what about the new trouble?"

"Why, it appears that a few weeks ago they got a long cable from Europe in which a Lady Somebody was mentioned. In one place in the despatch she was styled 'lady,' in another just plain 'Mrs.' In the hurry of getting the 'stuff' upstairs Mills let the 'Mrs.' go through, and it made the millionaire proprietor so mad that he ordered the man who edited it discharged. As if a reprimand or a fine were not enough! Poor Mills pleaded long service, and after much deliberation the owner magnanimously consented to let him go on working for him."

"But why do these men stand for such treatment? Why don't they go elsewhere?"

"It sounds easy, but it isn't. After being so long in one office they come to think that it is the only place

in the world where they can earn a living, and so put up with all kinds of humiliations rather than resign."

"It's a rotten business," acquiesced Roy. "I'll get out."

"Yes," growled Blake, "there's nothing in it. I'd known when I began what I know now I'd have jumped into the river first. You can never make more than enough to just live upon. The average salary does not exceed \$35 a week—the wages of a clerk. Even the crack men, the reporters who get good space bills, rarely average more than \$4,000 a year. In any other business, men of this ability and energy would be making \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year. They really don't make \$4,000 a year, for a good deal has to go on expenses which they would not otherwise incur. Newspaper work demands the energy of a horse, the wisdom of a judge, the tact of a diplomat, and a general knowledge of men and affairs that in any other walk of life would assure a handsome competence for old age, but the newspaper man sacrifices the best years of his life, wears out his vitality, and when the best in him is gone, he is thrown pitilessly aside as a back number. It is notorious that many newspaper men when they reach old age are practically paupers."

"But some men get big salaries," insisted Roy. "Look at Hinton of the *Vulture* who gets \$50,000 and Wainwright of the *Owl* who has had \$20,000 for

years. Both are rich men to-day. Can't one imitate their example?"

"They are exceptions that prove the rule," replied Blake. "Hinton is an exceptionally clever writer who has no scruples about selling his brains to the highest bidder. Wainwright is an entirely different kind of man. His gift is not writing, but organization. is not very popular with the men because it is well known that he would not hesitate to sacrifice his best friend to further his own interests, but the owner of the paper identifies him with the remarkable success of the Owl and rewards him accordingly. But newspaper owners are fickle and no one knows it better than these men, seemingly so secure. They say Wainwright never receives a cable message without expecting to find in it a demand for his instant resignation. Men who earn big salaries one day, men whose names are spoken of with bated breath in newspaperdom, are next heard of living in Harlem flats, peddling out Syndicate letters."

The train stopped at 18th street and Roy and Blake got out and proceeded to the Hospital of Brotherly Love, an institution supported by the city, and much dreaded by the destitute poor. The assignment they were on was important if not exactly a pleasant one. A male nurse, a brutal wretch masquerading in the guise of an Angel of Mercy, had beaten a patient until he had died from his injuries. Such assaults

he had heard were of common occurrence in this particular hospital and that and other evils had made it a by-word among charitable institutions. If relatives made a fuss, there was an investigation which invariably ended in a general whitewashing. present case was particularly revolting. admitted to the alcoholic ward in perfect health, died mysteriously on the second day, and hurried preparations were made by hospital employés for his burial. But a courageous and public-spirited coroner, whose suspicions were awakened, insisted that the man's neck had been broken by violence. The exposé caused a great sensation and although attempts were made to belittle the charge by general denials, the Commissioner of Public Charities ordered a searching investigation, and as a result several of the nurses were discharged and the system reorganized. This is what had taken Roy to the place.

A crowd of reporters were already on the spot, buzzing like so many noisy blue-bottles round such hospital employés as would consent to be interviewed. They besieged the dingy office just inside the main entrance, clamoring for the latest details of the scandal. The hospital building itself was an old-fashioned, gloomy-looking place with an atmosphere smelling of disinfectants and reeking with suggestions of secret tragedies that never reached the public ear, of sudden and suspicious deaths, of merciless ante-mortem oper-

ations "in the interest of science" on helpless, expiring paupers. How often, wondered Roy, had these grim, forbidding-looking walls resounded in the stillness of the night with the shrieks of the tortured, the death rattle of the dying? On either side of the main hall, wide stairways gave access to the wards above, and every now and then a female nurse in attractive uniform, or a house surgeon, attired all in white, his stethoscope dangling from his coat pocket, passed up and down.

The office in which the reporters had gathered was divided across its entire length by a barrier behind which were half a dozen surly clerks. All round the room ran greasy benches on which sat forlorn-looking creatures, come either to visit a sick relative or to claim their dead and rescue a kinsman from that supreme horror-Potter's Field! The clerks scratching away at their desks looked weary and disgusted. Their coarse, cold faces reflected their unsympathetic natures. Life was all gray to them. Daily association with hospital routine and every phase of human suffering had made them callous and indifferent. was all one to them if people lived or died as long as they themselves could manage to get three meals a day. A doctor dropped in to give an order and the waiting reporters immediately pounced on him and plied him with embarrassing questions. He was indifferent, like the rest, cracking jokes, resenting this

intrusion by a prying public into the private affairs of a big city hospital. What business was it of the public anyway? Of course, the stories were sensational nonsense. They didn't kill people at the Hospital of Brotherly Love. It would be too much like work.

Anxious to follow up another clue, Roy left the main building and proceeded toward the Morgue, a small gray stone building, of peculiarly sinister appearance, that lay at the other end of the grounds, near the river. On the way there he overtook two young men-mere boys-who were carrying something on a stretcher. The "thing" was covered with a sheet. There was nothing to tell what it was, but Roy guessed intuitively and a cold shiver ran down his spine. It was the body of a young woman, a patient who had just died in one of the wards, and the corpse was labelled: "Destitute. No friends." The eyes were barely closed; the flesh was scarcely They wasted no time at the hospital of Brotherly Love. The bed occupied by the dead must be hastily vacated to make room for the living. If no troublesome relatives appeared to claim the body, it was laid out by the nurses with wonderful dexterity and despatch and hustled off to the Morgue, where it was packed in a coarse deal coffin and shipped to Potter's Field—the common burial ground of the city's dead, the Golgotha of human degradation and

despair, the Unspeakable End, where man thrusts his fellow into a hole in the ground like so much carrion which may offend his nostrils.

Impelled more by curiosity than by duty, Roy entered the Morgue, not without misgivings, for he dreaded to see what he expected to find there. Inside was a large hall lined on all sides with boxed receptacles for the dead, arranged like movable shelves one above the other and each corpse labelled for identification, like so many wax dolls in a toy shop. The air was considerably colder than outside, the place being kept at a much lower temperature in order to retard decomposition.

Instinctively Roy removed his hat. A sense of awe and respect came over him as he realized that he stood on the threshold of the Unknown and that he was looking on those who had gone on before, and had now solved the Great Mystery. There were several men and boys in the place working unconcernedly, whistling and jesting. They looked amused when Roy uncovered, taking him for a religious "guy," and feeling themselves perfectly comfortable in this charnel house. They made stupid, jocular remarks about the appearance of the "stiffs," which they handled with indecent familiarity, as if it never occurred to their thick understandings that it might be their turn to-morrow.

Off this main hall was a small office where two

clerks, writing in big ledgers, as in a hotel, kept tally of their dead guests. The sound of a clicking type-writer, the intrusion of matter-of-fact commercialism in the mansion of death, struck a harsh, incongruous note. On the other side of the building, and visible from the office, was the shipping room where coffins of all sizes lay waiting for occupants.

Roy was seized with horror. He felt a sensation of nausea. All the thoughts concerning the fearful end called "death," which occur to most men and women at least once in their lives, passed through his mind—the last illness, the falling into eternal sleep, the appearance of wax, the stiffening of the body, the flight of the soul, the helpless lump of inert clay, the tissue-destroying chemical change, the dreadful process of decomposition, and appalling putrefaction of what had once been tender, living flesh, fair to look upon, the closing up in a narrow box, shutting out from the world forever one who was all the world to us, a human being endowed with wonderful faculties, able to think, to see, to walk, to speak, and now what?—an inert, unconscious mass of nothingness which men thrust hurriedly out of sight into a hole dug in the ground, amid rites believed in by some. meaningless for others, covered with damp earth tramped down by the rough boots of professional grave diggers-glad of the occasion which gives them an extra glass of beer—the rotting of the coffin in the

clayey soil, the intrusion of the worms, the eating of the putrescent flesh, the blanching of the bones! Oh, the hopeless horror of it! And there was no escape from the dreadful fate—every man born of woman must take the awful journey!

While Roy was getting from the clerk in the office the data he wanted, the stretcher bearers he had passed in the grounds had entered the building with their grewsome burden and were already in the shipping room, engaged noisily in selecting a coffin of the size they required. They whistled cheerfully as they worked. Roy happened to glance through the open door and what he saw transfixed him to the spot. The two men had removed the body from the stretcher and were placing it in a coffin. The body was that of a young woman, pretty once perhaps, before vice and drink had made her what she was, an outcast of society, and it was entirely nude except for a sheet wrapped loosely round it. The coffin was too small and the men swore with impatience at the obstinacy of the body in refusing to go in. They put the trunk and head in first and then tried to get in the legs, but they were half an inch too long and protruded so it was impossible to close down the lid. Then, one of the men, growing impatient, jammed the lid on, and jumped on it viciously. There was a crackling noise, as of breaking bones, and Roy turned away faint and sick at the stomach. He had had enough. He rushed out of the foul place, fearing to breathe any longer its poisoned air. That, he thought, was the last straw. He could not stand any longer an occupation which made such sights possible.

That same day he resigned from the *Vulture* and quit journalism for good. Eunice was delighted and urged him at once to see his friend Winchell who had promised the letter for one of the big iron people in Pittsburg. That, certainly, was the land of promise as far as he, Roy, was concerned. Pittsburg, the city of Steel!

The following morning Roy was at his friend's office, and explained the situation.

"I'm not surprised," said Winchell sympathetically. "Didn't I tell you it was a dog's life? I wouldn't be surprised if you did exceeding well in the steel business. It's something tangible—it's big, and if you make good—why, there's a fortune in it. I'll give you the warmest kind of a letter to Miller. He is everything at the Excelsior Steel Works—next man in importance to Armstrong himself—and I think he'll give you at least a show."

Two days later Eunice and Roy said good-by to Mrs. Davis and her parrots, and they left New York on the Pennsylvania railroad for Pittsburg.

CHAPTER IV

ITTSBURG! The home of the steel men, the stronghold of industrial giants, the grimy, murky city of fog, smoke and flame, where amid the ceaseless roar of blazing furnaces and the thunderous pounding of titanic machinery, running night and day, was forged the wondrous metal which had given its workers possession of almost fabulous Pittsburg! unique and progressive city of the Ohio, city of tremendous energy and tremendous fortunes, city of two hundred millionaires, risen from nothing, their colossal wealth acquired in a night. astounding the entire world with their sudden riches, which, merely at their bidding, surged up about them like a golden flood. Pittsburg! with its historic associations of the Seven Years' War, the cradle of Washington's military genius, its terrible disasters, its commercial struggles and triumphs, its narrow. crooked streets and forest of tall factory chimneys, its cosmopolitan population, its fine public buildings and business sky-scrapers, all smoke-stained and soiled, its manufacturing districts marked out by a thick pall of smoke by day and by lurid fires by night, its intricate network of railroads, its graceful suspen-

sion bridges and viaducts spanning two noble rivers crowded with vast fleets of ore and coal-laden vessels, its fine shops and handsome theatres, its inclined trolley lines giving access to the hills on the east side and the rolling country beyond the slope, where the money kings built their palatial homes.

This was the city of good hope to which Roy and his wife now resolutely turned their faces. had only the vaguest ideas regarding the steel industry. She knew, of course, in a general kind of way that steel was an indispensable metal, the very backbone of modern civilization, providing steel rails for railroads, steel girders for bridges, structural steel for sky-scrapers, armor plate for battleships. was also well aware that the men engaged in its manufacture were acquiring great wealth with startling rapidity. If Roy could get into the steel business and make a success of it there was no reason why he, too, should not one day be a millionaire. that she desired great wealth either for herself or him. Her tastes were far from being extravagant and her wants were few. Her past experiences in life had taught her not to crave for things which she could not afford. She would always be content with enough to support them modestly and comfortably in the style of living to which they had been accustomed. If, she thought, they could afford to rent a little house in the suburbs of Pittsburg, within easy distance of the steel works, so it would not be too far for Roy, with a little garden in which she could grow vegetables and flowers; if she had a girl to do the rough work, and a piano and all the books she wanted, and two dresses a year; if with these she could have plenty of Roy's companionship, she would be supremely happy. She could hardly imagine an existence more enviable. And when her baby came her joy would be even more complete. She did not know what Roy could expect to earn at the steel works. He did not know himself. Probably not much at first. If they were not able to afford everything, they could cut out the servant and the piano. But she would insist on the little garden and the books, even if she had to work for them herself.

With these simple wants gratified, and given the blessing of good health for herself and husband, Eunice foresaw a happy, almost ideal, life before them both. She had often wondered why one heard so much about marriage being a failure. It was true that many marriages turned out unhappily, but the number was small in proportion to the immense population. The discontents were in a small minority. The average marriage was a success, giving new generations to posterity, creating cheerful homes, made sunny with the laughter of romping children. If this were not the case, if marriage were indeed a failure, it would disappear from our institutions, to

be succeeded by some better plan. But so far man had devised no system so well suited to his civilization, to his health, to his morals, as monogamy. All the wild, foolish talk about trial marriages which, for the sake of her sex, she was sorry to see a woman had advocated, was the idle vaporings of ill-balanced minds, warped judgments, seekers after notoriety. The suggestion was particularly odious in that it was almost a plea for free love, with its deadly menace to the integrity of the family and the wrong inflicted on helpless offspring. The State should regulate marriages-that Eunice firmly believed. It was criminal to allow consumptives and chronic drunkards to marry and reproduce their kind. A paternal state should supervise marriages, just as it should have some control over divorces. The present divorce laws were scandalous. Why what was unlawful in New York should be permitted in Dakota, when it concerned the welfare of the whole nation, she had never been able to understand. Lax divorce laws, permitting loosely tied marriages to be untied with absurd facility, were a peril to the stability of the State. in spite of its divorces, marriage still flourished in the country at large as a sturdy and popular institution. Unhappy marriages were usually to be found in the big cities where the people were corrupt, where the moral standard was low, where mothers evaded the responsibility of motherhood because it interfered

with their social pleasures, where marital infidelity was regarded as a joke, where the sacredness of the family circle was derided. Was it a wonder that marriage failed to be fruitful in such sterile soil? For happy marriages, for happy family life, one must look not in the big cities, which were corrupt to the core, but in the millions of little homes scattered over the broad bosom of the land, the attractive home in suburb and country of artisan and merchant, the wife and children eagerly watching at evening for the homecoming of the bread-winner. Some men and women do not find happiness in marriage, because they do not seek it, because instead of looking for it at their fireside, in the circle of their own flesh and blood, they go elsewhere, running after the empty shadow, seeking riches, filled with social ambitions, striving to outdo their neighbors in dress and show. Many marriages were unhappy because of the ease with which divorce was obtainable. Men and women often entered carelessly into sacred marital ties, because they knew that the bonds could be easily broken. This was especially true of the richer classes, who usually marry for self-interest. It was only the matches that were made in Heaven that endured, and to this category her own union with Roy certainly belonged.

All this was passing now through her mind as, seated with Roy in the train which was whirling to-

ward the Smoky City, she weaved her day-dreams in the loom of life.

Both were silent, busy with their thoughts. was recalling once more his father's parting words, "You won't find it so easy!" He was right. wasn't so easy-at least it hadn't proved so thus far. His journalistic experiment was a wretched failure sad waste of time and energy. Would he be more successful in Pittsburg? Or would he fail in everything? The thought maddened him, and as he felt Eunice's form nestling against him he asked himself by what right he had invited this girl to share the uncertainties of his career. Why hadn't he tried first what he could do? After paying the fare to Pittsburg they had just ninety-two dollars and fifty cents left-all they had in the world! If he failed to get something to do-what? He certainly could never go back and confess defeat. He was too proud for that. But Eunice should not suffer. He would prevail on her to leave him-temporarily at least-and go on teaching while he made another effort to get There was no telling where it might end. along. Perhaps he had over-estimated his ability; he might be incapable of earning a dollar. Then what could he do-enlist in the army, beg his bread or throw himself into the river? The mental strain he was under caused his grip to mechanically tighten on Eunice's hand, which was lying in his. She quickly

looked up, and at once noticed his worried expression.

- "What's the matter, dear?" she asked anxiously.
- "Oh, nothing," he replied evasively, turning to watch the flying landscape as the train sped on toward the West.
- "Yes, there is," she insisted. "I know there is. You are worrying."
- "Well," he stammered, "naturally I'm a little nervous. I don't know where we are going nor what the outcome will be. There may be nothing there for me after all. The work may not suit me. We can't afford to experiment very long," he added gloomily.

Half turning in her seat, Eunice clasped both his hands in hers.

"Don't talk that way, Roy," she said earnestly. "Something tells me that Providence is directing your steps to Pittsburg. You made a failure of journalism. Why? Because you had no real sympathy for it. It did not interest you. Your heart was not in it. With this new business it will be quite different. In the busy steel works, amid the roar of the furnaces and the whirl of machinery you will be at home. You have a talent for mechanics—your natural tastes always ran that way. The steel men will soon discover your value. Opportunity will soon develop the genius that lies latent within you, and step by step

you will rise to the top. I feel that you will make a great success of it, Roy, really I do!"

Her face was glowing with enthusiasm, her eyes sparkled hopefully and her words vibrated with the convincing accents of prophecy. Roy smiled. He felt encouraged. If he had not been ashamed he would have kissed her before the whole carful of people. What she said was true. He certainly was more interested in machinery than in tramping through Brooklyn for obituaries. He felt that if once he were given the right opportunity he would astonish people.

Then they talked about the city they were going to, and the wonders of the vast steel industry. Eunice wanted to know all about it—its history, its process. Roy gave her as good an account as his slim knowledge of the subject permitted.

The steel business was practically an infant industry in America, having received its present enormous impetus only since the Civil War, yet, young as it was, its importance now staggered the world. This was due largely to the recent discoveries of vast ore deposits in the Far West, but chiefly to the phenomenal growth and prosperity of the country. After the war a great steel boom set in. Railroads, shipwrights, builders demanded a metal tougher and more durable than iron and yet cheaper than steel, the cost of which was prohibitive. A large fortune awaited the man who could make a cheap steel, and, strange to say,

two men, one an Irish-American the other a French-Englishman, hit almost simultaneously upon the socalled "Bessemer" process. William Kelley of Pittsburg is credited with having discovered it first, while Henry Bessemer of England succeeded in securing the patents and in immortalizing his name.

The story goes that Kelley hit upon it by accident one day while watching his refinery fire, just as, some years previous, George Stephenson had discovered the principle of the steam engine by watching a kettle boil. Kelley noticed a white spot in the yellow molten metal at a point where it met a blast of cool air. He was astonished, for according to all current notions the hot metal should be chilled by the contact of the But Kelley happened to be somewhat of a chem-He understood the peculiar relations of carbon and oxygen, and after a moment's reflection he jumped to his feet, confident that he made a great discovery. He was laughed at, but he went to work to make his tilting converter, which was the first model of the hundred Bessemer converters now in use in America.

"I saw one of these converters at work the last time I was in Pittsburg," added Roy. "It was a magnificent sight—just like seeing Vesuvius in full eruption. I'll take you to see it."

"How interesting it all is!" murmured Eunice, rather sleepily. Her head was resting comfortably

on her husband's shoulder, and as he talked on she listened dreamily, wondering if he would one day make a great name like the famous men he spoke about. She felt tired, and it felt good to lie nestled there. No matter what the future had in store, they had each other. No one could take her husband from her, and soon, she reflected, there would be another to love. That event was not so far away now. It would be all they could do to get nicely settled before baby came. Pleased to find Eunice such a good' listener, Roy continued.

The steel men now had a process for making cheap steel, but the business could never grow to large proportions unless there was more ore available. Pennsylvania and New York up to this time had furnished most of the ore, but the supply did not meet the demand.

Then suddenly came the sensational discoveries of vast ore deposits in the Far West. In a wilderness on Lake Superior, a roaming band of Indians offered to show a sceptical American a mountain of solid iron. He allowed himself to be led, and after journeying a few days they came to a mountain composed entirely of solid ore, which glistened in the sun like polished metal. This and later discoveries of ore fields in Michigan and Wisconsin made the United States the biggest producer of steel in the world.

Steel now began to attract general attention to

Pittsburg. The enormous possibilities of the industry, with its golden vision of fabulous profits, appealed forcibly to the most powerful financiers in the country. Capital poured in on all sides. Companies were quickly organized, works were built and furnaces lighted, each in violent competition, catering to the world's trade, cutting one another's throats, working night and day in a frenzied race to beat the record in the output of manufactured metal.

Out of this fierce rivalry arose a man who by the sheer force of his gift for organization, his genius for managing men, soon dominated the situation. John Armstrong, the Steel King, whose personal fortune, already estimated at \$200,000,000, was all earned in the steel business, was an organizer of victory, a born captain of industry. Beating his competitors at their own game, he had succeeded in defeating all the combinations formed to crush him, he had out-generalled and terrorized his business rivals, and to-day was the most successful steel maker in America. Armstrong's career, continued Roy, was an encouragement to any one as showing how successful a man could be even in a business he knew nothing of. He had started life as a commercial drummer, and it was by the purest accident that he went into steel. One day while on a visit to Pittsburg he visited one of the plants and saw a Bessemer converter in full blast. The grandeur of the spectacle so impressed him that he resolved to

devote all his energy and time forthwith to steel making. With a few thousand dollars thriftily saved he organized a company, which failed. On its ruins he formed the Excelsior Steel Company, with larger capital and with improved machinery. This proved a success from the start, and the results astounded the world. The average output of a furnace then was a hundred tons of steel a day, but soon the Armstrong company was turning out over four hundred tons a day.

John Armstrong had been lucky in securing for superintendent Jake Smith, a prodigy in getting results, and the pace he set was terrific, the plants working feverishly night and day. Armstrong's own cleverness in obtaining orders from governments. railroads and contractors did the rest. Orders poured in from all corners of the globe, the business trebled that of any three other plants in America and soon a steady stream of gold was flowing into the company's coffers. In a few years the delighted partners were millionaires. But although Armstrong had shown that steel making was the greatest money-making business on earth, still he was not satisfied. all the orders he could attend to, he was enjoying an enormous annual income, which had already made him one of the richest men of his day, but still he was not content. He wanted power. He would not rest till he had crushed out of existence or absorbed every

other steel plant in America, and with that object in view he sat down before the gates of the other important steel companies like a victorious general investing a hostile city. The steel war was now on. His competitors defied him, but he would prove more than a match for them.

"If," added Roy, "I am lucky enough to attract the attention of Mr. Armstrong, my fortune is made. They say that any of his workmen he takes a fancy to he makes a partner. Nearly all his present partners have risen from the ranks. Mr. Brent, the present vice-president of the company, used to work at the furnaces in overalls. So you see, dear, there may be a chance for me."

Eunice remained silent for a moment, as if she were thinking intently. Then turning solemnly to Roy, she said:

"Roy, do you know, something tells me that you will be like that man in the overalls. You will go even higher. You may even be president."

She smiled up at him. He gave a furtive look round the car to see if any one was watching, then he bent his head and kissed her.

CHAPTER V

N their arrival in the Smoky City they took a room temporarily at a cheap hotel in the centre of the town, from the windows of which, at night, they could see the leaping flames of the distant ceaseless fires. Eunice sensibly argued that it was useless to decide upon any permanent location until Roy found out what he could do with the steel people. If he was successful in getting a position they would take a little house.

So early the next day Roy proceeded to the offices of the Excelsior Steel Company. It was a large, imposing-looking place, occupying an entire floor of one of the big skyscrapers and arranged like a bank, most of the space being taken up by huge safes and the desks of the clerical force, while visitors had to transact through little windows whatever business brought them there. Producing the letter which his friend Winchell had given him, Roy inquired for Mr. Miller.

"He's in New York. Won't be back till Monday," replied a clerk, hardly deigning to as much as glance at the questioner.

Roy's face fell. Here was a serious setback. Every

moment now was precious. Waiting till Monday meant four days' forced idleness and more uncertainty and worry. Besides, their funds were fast going. However, there was no help for it. He would have to wait until Mr. Miller came back. He returned to the hotel in anything but an amiable frame of mind.

But Eunice took the disappointment good-naturedly. One of the rules of life she had adopted was never to fret over anything she could not help, and thus she spared herself many heartburnings. She was always cheerful under the most trying circumstances. Periods of discouragement come to every one at times, and Roy had not been exempt from spells of depression, especially during his harrowing newspaper experiences in New York, but his wife's sunny disposition never failed to dispel the cloud and spur Roy on to renewed effort. He realized this, and while secretly he turned to her for comfort and advice when worried, openly he professed to be exasperated at her Himself of a nervous, worrying serene optimism. disposition, it sometimes irritated him to see her so calm and unperturbed.

"I wish I had your nature!" he blurted out, as they were sitting in their room at the hotel. He felt a sense of personal injury because his wife took Mr. Miller's absence so calmly. Eunice was busy with her needle, making diminutive garments for their expected guest, and she looked up at him and smiled. "Yes," he added petulantly, "I mean it. You never seem to care one way or the other. Nothing upsets you. You never worry. I sometimes think you don't care. Surely you appreciate the seriousness of our position?"

"I certainly do," she replied, with a reproachful look that made him sorry he spoke. "But why should we worry? It won't do a bit of good. Besides, these little difficulties that confront us now are really not so very serious. While we have youth and health it is wicked to allow oneself to be discouraged. When real sorrows come—great sorrows like those I have known in my life—then one may worry and grieve, but our little troubles are really nothing, Roy, dear. We must have patience. I am patient. You must be patient."

He knew she was right, as she always was. If she were as he was, ready to turn back at the first obstacle, she would have discouraged him long ago. It was her brave little heart that kept him going. He would not let her see that he had less pluck than she had. He stooped and kissed her, already contrite because he had appeared harsh, and while his lips were still hovering about her cheek she murmured:

"Don't be discouraged, Roy. You will succeed. You will become rich—famous. I feel it, I know it; and then perhaps you'll regret you married me. You'll be sorry you're not free to enjoy your success—your

wealth. A new world will open to you—a world in which I shall have no place."

He threw his arms fondly round her and drew her to him.

"Eunice," he said, "if your words come true, I would not care to know a world in which I could not have you for my constant companion. If your words come true, if I am so fortunate as to make a success and build up a fortune, it will be for you to enjoy. If great riches come to me, it is in your lap that I shall lay them, for to you I shall owe everything."

She shook her head, refusing to look at it in that light. She had done nothing. If he achieved anything, it would be by his own efforts. He had the ability. Only the right opportunity was wanting, and she insisted upon it so strongly that finally Roy became convinced of it himself. He had plenty of self-confidence. If this steel business afforded an opportunity he would make good in it. Then it would be either much or nothing. He would either rise to the very top or sink out of sight altogether. There could be no half-way. He was not the kind of man to be content with a subordinate position.

The following Monday saw him once more at the offices of the Excelsior Steel Company. This time he was more successful. He sent in Winchell's letter,

and after waiting about half an hour he was ushered into the private office of Mr. Miller.

The general manager of the Excelsior Steel Company was a distinguished-looking man of about fifty years of age, with white hair and mustache, a keen, intelligent face and a quick, explosive speech and dominating manner. He kept Roy standing a moment or two without looking up from the accumulation of four days' mail heaped on his desk, and then, giving him a quick glance, waved him to a chair.

"So you wish to get into the steel business?" he said. His tone was slightly ironical. He had noticed Roy's well-made clothes and white hands, which did not exactly suggest the practical steel maker.

"Yes, sir," replied Roy boldly. "I have been doing newspaper work, but it wasn't big enough. Steel appealed to me, and——"

The manager interrupted him. "There's one thing you newspaper men are never deficient in, and that is nerve. Nothing phases you. You imagine yourselves as well able to preach a sermon as to command a battleship. Why, what do you know about steel? You probably couldn't tell the difference between a 'mixer' and a 'converter.' We've no use for dudes here. The successful steel man must throw away his fine clothes, jump into overalls and learn the business from the bottom up."

"That's what I want to do," cried Roy, half rising

from his chair in his eagerness to convince the manager of his sincerity. "Put me at any kind of work—shovelling coal, stoking furnaces, anything until I can show you what I can do. I'm a first-rate mathematician, and few can beat me at applied mechanics."

Mr. Miller looked more attentively at the young man. There was something in his tone and manner that he liked. Expert mechanics were just what the Excelsior Steel Company was looking for. His tone was more conciliatory as he said:

"There's a splendid opportunity in this business for a young man with brains and energy. Our policy has been to give responsible positions to young men who proved they had the ability to produce results. We don't care whether a man is a veteran or a tyro so long as he can accomplish things. There are no apprenticeships to be served here. The newcomer who proves that he has real ability in any branch of the business may be a partner to-morrow. Out of forty superintendents now in our employ only four are men with technical school training. The others all began as simple workmen. We have no use for incompetents. Directly a man shows inefficiency he is dropped. he is useful, he is promoted and given a share in the profits. I like your looks. Your friend Mr. Winchell recommends you highly. I am willing to give you a trial. You will start as assistant to Superintendent Smith, in the armor-plate department.

THE GAME

The salary is three dollars a day to start with. Report to Mr. Smith to-morrow. He will receive instructions from me meantime. Good morning."

Roy returned to the hotel jubilant. The opportunity he had longed for had come at last. Once inside the works there was no telling how high he might climb.

"Who knows!" he cried. "I may, as you said, be president of the company some day."

Eunice threw her arms around his neck.

"Of course you will!" she said. "Your very name, Roy, means king. You will be king of the steel world. I predict that you will become master of them all."

Early next day Roy reported to Superintendent Smith. The young man had discarded his fashionably cut clothes and appeared in a ready-made suit of sombre hue which he and Eunice had picked out in a Pittsburg outfitter's establishment the evening before. The purchase had made another hole of fifteen dollars in their scanty hoard, but it would never do to make a bad impression in the mills at the outset. He had the appearance of a neat-looking mechanic attired in his Sunday best.

Superintendent Smith, a grizzled veteran, eyed him approvingly. He was a rough diamond himself, but he was a good judge of men, and he liked the swing of Roy's walk, his clear and intelligent eye, the way he talked. He put a few questions testing his knowl-

edge of practical mechanics, and Roy's answers apparently satisfied him, for he at once evinced interest in showing him about the shop and instructing him in what there was to do.

If John Armstrong was the soul of the Excelsion Steel Company, Jake Smith was its heart. Scientists showed the way to make steel, and financiers furnished the necessary capital, but it took men of Smith's calibre to hammer out the molten metal in the shops in order to make the industry a success. Jake had grown up with the steel business from boyhood, and was familiar with the practical end of every part of His men respected him for this reason. was nothing he told them to do which he was not capable of doing as well, if not better, himself. was in absolute command of nearly ten thousand workmen and never had a general a better drilled or better disciplined army. The men were devoted to him, and as a result he got out of them twice as much as superintendents in other plants who adopted a different Here was the real secret of the Excelsior Company's phenomenal success. Smith had set such a pace in his mills that their competitors found it impossible to keep up. To maintain this breakneck speed. and fill the company's treasury with gold, he spared neither himself nor his men. Yet he was not a hard taskmaster. Stern, and subject under provocation to tempestuous bursts of rage, he was always just. A

giant in stature and strength, he could be gentle as a child and kind-hearted as a woman. He knew almost all his men by name, and took a personal interest in the troubles of each. Hundreds of dollars of his own money he had been known to give away helping the families of workmen thrown out of work through illness.

Such was the man under whose ægis Roy began his career as a steel maker.

Late that same day Mr. Miller went down to the works on business, and happening to catch sight of Roy, who was busy on a job, he beckoned the superintendent aside and asked:

"Well, Jake, how's the new assistant? Any good?"

The superintendent shifted his quid of 'baccy, ejected about half a pint of saliva from his mouth, and answered laconically:

"Guess he'll get along. But cawn't allus tell from 'pearances. Seems bright enough, and willin' enough, an' don't pretend to know everything in creation. That's more than I can say for the other chaps you sent me."

When, at the end of the first day, Roy went home, Eunice hurried forward to greet him.

"Well, dear?" she said, in eager interrogation.

He was in good spirits, and, taking her in his arms, gave her an affectionate hug:

"It's all right, little wife. From now on, hubby's a steel maker. There's nothing to beat it. It is simply wonderful. If I don't come to something in that business I'm no good."

Eunice beamed as he went on to give an account of the day's doings, his interview with the superintendent and the work they put him to do.

"There's nothing I don't understand," he added.

"And in a month or two I shall be able to show them a trick or two myself. There's a Harvard man there named Leonard Harvey. He seems a good sort, and is quite friendly. He's one of the company's most promising men, and already holds a very responsible position. He told me that when a man suits promotion is very quick, and he led me to think I shall get on all right."

The next thing to be done was to decide upon a home. They could not afford a very luxurious one on Roy's present salary, but rents were cheap, and no doubt they would be able to manage for the present. Roy, naturally, had no time to go home-hunting, so the task fell on Eunice.

After much diligent searching she found a little two-story house at Glendale, a picturesque little place about two miles from the steel works. It was a little frame cottage, one of about a dozen pleasantly situated among the rolling green fields lying to the southwest of the company's property. There were in it

four fair-sized rooms, besides a kitchen and bathroom, and what pleased Eunice more than anything
else, the house had a roomy porch and a small garden
back and front. The rent was twenty dollars a month,
rather more than they thought they ought to pay,
but when Roy returned to the hotel that evening, and
listened to Eunice's enthusiastic description of the
house, he gave her ten dollars to pay a deposit on it
at once. Then they worried about furniture. They
could not move into an empty house. They must have
chairs to sit on and a bed to sleep in.

Roy suddenly got a bright idea. He once saw a play where a young couple, reduced by a slender purse to strange expedients, had furnished a flat completely by using empty soap boxes turned upside down and tastily draped with any odds and ends of colored material. The general effect, he remembered, was very æsthetic. He did not recall how they had managed to make a bed out of the soap boxes, but they had answered admirably for dining-room table and chairs.

The scheme did not appeal to Eunice at all. They must begin right, she said. Furnishing their little home was a serious matter, and not to be treated as a joke.

"Supposing," she said, with a roguish twinkle in her eye, "Mr. John Armstrong were to call on us one day, and when I asked him to sit down he suddenly discovered he was sitting on a soap box. What would you do?"

"What would I do?" laughed Roy. "Why, I'd ask him to raise my wages, so I could buy some chairs."

Then Eunice, whose more practical ideas generally prevailed, thought of something else. She had heard of furniture dealers who sell goods on instalments. Perhaps they could get what they wanted—say a hundred or two hundred dollars' worth—and pay so much a week. If their rent cost five dollars and the furniture about three, that would leave a balance of ten dollars a week for food, gas, clothes, coal and other expenses. The girl and piano seemed a long way off. Eunice looked ruefully at Roy.

"Not very much, is it?"

"Oh, it'll be all right, dear. They'll soon give me more; in fact, Mr. Miller said as much. Don't worry, we'll be all right. Here," he added, passing over to her what was left of their savings, "take this and do what you can with the furniture people."

So while Roy was away all day, acquiring the art of steel making, Eunice attended to the business details connected with taking their new home. She found a dealer who was willing to let her have two hundred dollars' worth of furniture, and she immediately picked out what she wanted and had it sent to Glendale. Meantime she had attended to the lease, the gas was

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turned on, and in a few days they were able to take possession.

Roy, of course, was delighted with everything. Firstly, the house was Eunice's selection; secondly, any kind of a home was welcome after knocking about so long in hotels and boarding-houses. What a relief, he said, to think that they could say what they liked, do what they liked, eat what they liked, with nobody present to criticise them. He admired everything, while Eunice took him proudly from room to room and into the back garden, where, she said, they would grow their own vegetables.

"We'll have chickens, too," cried Roy. "I love chicken fricassee!"

"Don't be a goose, Roy," laughed Eunice. "You can't have chickens and eat them, too. People have chickens for the eggs. Yes," she added thoughtfully, "we'll have chickens."

The outside of the house was painted a bright yellow and the shutters were a vivid red. The color scheme rather jarred Roy's æsthetic taste, and Eunice, noticing his pained expression as he gazed upon it, understood. But what could they do? They could not afford to have it repainted. Hadn't Eunice said it was better not to fret over what one cannot help? So Roy made no comment, for which Eunice was grateful.

She, herself, was pleased as a child with a doll's



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house. This was her doll's house. She was the "mommer" and Roy was the "popper." She sang and laughed all day, running from room to room, hanging pictures here, arranging furniture there, cleaning and polishing, admiring everything from the preposterous flowers on the parlor wall-paper to the diminutive ice-box in the kitchen, which would barely hold a can of sardines. Then when six o'clock came, while the dinner was cooking, she would go out to the porch, and watch the long road that led to the works, straining her eyes to catch the first glimpse of the familiar figure of the loved one.

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CHAPTER VI

N a few weeks' time the young couple felt as if they had been at Glendale, leading their present bucolic existence, all their lives. They were now fairly comfortably settled. Eunice had got her vegetable garden started and Roy was busy each evening building his chicken coop. They had become acquainted with some of their neighbors, ordinary country folk, uncouth, uncultured, not very congenial as associates, having few interests with them in common, but kind-hearted, friendly people, always ready to inconvenience themselves in order to render a ser-In the artificial, vitiated air of the city, which engenders distrust and dislike of strangers, one may live for years in the same house without speaking to or even knowing the name of, the people next door, but in the country, where the air is free from the contamination of convention, where man greets his fellow with a frank eye and cordial hand grip, no such barriers exist. Each is willing to do another a good turn, never knowing when he may need it himself, and it is surprising how this spirit of good fellowship and human sympathy adds to the happiness of all.

The cottage on their immediate right was occupied

by a German family named Schultz. The husband was also in the employ of the Excelsior Steel Company. being foreman of one of the blast furnaces, and his wife, a stout blonde woman of the pure Saxon type. had formerly been in domestic service. Both being thrifty, a characteristic of their countrymen, they had saved enough by the time they were married to buy this little house, which now they owned clear of encumbrance, so from the worldly point of view they were better off than Roy and Eunice, who had married largely on love and theory. They had one little girl of eight who was the exact replica in miniature of her mother, always scrupulously clean and neatly dressed, and with two stiff flaxen braids the ends of which curled upward. She was serious beyond her years, having no taste for toys and games, but displaying the gifts of the born haus frau, sweeping the porch, going errands or tending the garden with the dignity, gravity and precision of a grown woman.

Eunice was at once attracted to the child and this had led to a better acquaintance with the parents. Roy quite agreed with his wife that it was good policy to make friends with everybody. Besides, it would make it less lonely for her while he was away all day. He did not see why he should hesitate to treat the Schultzes as equals. The social position which a man held in the world depended either on the size of his fortune or the prominence he had attained by his own efforts.

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If he succeeded in climbing high, he could not afford to mingle on equal terms with those at the foot of the ladder. In practical sociology, lines of class must inevitably be drawn. But until he had made a lofty position for himself he was no better than anybody else. Both he and Eunice had the advantage over the Schultzes in the matter of education and general culture. Schultz, on the other hand, was an expert steel maker. He held a responsible position at the works, furthermore he made more money and owned his own home. So, in the evenings, after supper, Roy would often smoke and chat with the foreman discussing the making of steel, while Eunice and Mrs. Schultz were interested in matters more closely connected with the making of a home.

Schultz was a big blond man of about forty-five, with a deep, resonant voice. Like many workmen of his nationality, he was a chronic grumbler and an industrial firebrand. He kept in close touch with the various socialistic groups and thanks to his own oratorical powers was one of the favorite speakers at the fortnightly meetings of the Steel Workers' Union, a formidable labor organization which was growing more powerful and more arrogant every day. It had thirty thousand steel workers enrolled and at a word from its officers, the wheels in every shop would stop revolving, the fires in every furnace would go out. The Company was well aware of the Union's strength

and up to the present time had avoided any friction with the men likely to lead to an open rupture. But workmen of Schultz's type, who come to America impregnated with socialistic theories imperfectly digested and understood, were just the sort of men to sow dissatisfaction and unrest and make a peaceable compromise impossible. It had taken all the diplomatic powers of the Company to keep the men in good humor and neutralize the effect of the hotheads' wild talk. Already there were ominous rumors of a coming big strike.

One evening the foreman and Roy were sitting out on the porch smoking. Mrs. Schultz was indoors looking after little Mina, who did not feel well, and Eunice was keeping her company. It was so unusual for the child to be ill that they had sent for the doctor.

"It's coming, I tell you vot," Schultz was saying to Roy. "De men vill not be robbed. Mein Gott! Ve are tirty tousand. Ve can dictate our own terms. Eef de bosses von't give us de old contract ve vill declare var und go on von of de biggest strikes Amerika has seen alretty."

Having delivered himself of this tirade, the foreman relapsed into silence, puffing furiously at his corncob pipe.

"What's the grievance?" demanded Roy. "The men seem contented enough from what little I have

seen of them. Wages are good, work is steady. What more do they want?"

"Gott in Himmel!" exclaimed Schultz, "vot a greenhorn! De men contented? Dey is never contented, because dey is always being robbed by de capitalist. Eef vages is gute vy is dat? Because de bosses can't help demselves. Eef de vorkmen vere not organized, de bosses vould let dem all starve! De Union forced de bosses to give de old contract vich gave dem gute vages. Now de Company refuses to renew de contract. Dey vant to reduce de vages but dey shall not. De Union vill fight. De Company vill lose. You vill see! You vill see!"

Roy was not greatly elated at the possibility of labor troubles. He knew nothing of the merits of the case, having given the matter no attention, but the consequences of a strike—the works closed, ten thousand men out of employment—himself among them—winter coming on, food and other necessaries at famine prices—certainly the prospect was not a cheerful one. He knew it was almost a mania with Schultz, this idea of the tyranny of capital—the men at the works called him "the crazy Dutchman,"—so perhaps his talk was not to be taken seriously. He certainly would not tell Eunice. She would only worry.

Suddenly, there was a sound of wheels crunching the pebbles on the road and a one-horse buggy drew up at the curb. A dark man with a pointed beard and carrying a little handbag, sprang down.

"Guten abend, Herr Doctor," cried Schultz, hurrying forward to greet the new comer.

"How's the little girl?" asked the visitor, smiling pleasantly.

"Mina, she has a sore troat, und my vife is scared alretty of sore troats since de first chilt died of scarlet."

"That's right—that's right. One can't be too careful. There's a lot of sickness about. I'm attending three cases of scarlet now. A stitch in time saves nine, you know."

He proceeded up the porch, looking interrogatively at Roy. Schultz introduced the two men.

"Herr Doctor, dis is Roy Marshall. He vorks mit me at de vorks. He lives next toor. Marshall, dis is Dr. Brunner, de cleverest doctor in all Pennsylvania a big kind-hearted freund."

The doctor shrugged his shoulders as if the eulogy was distasteful to him, and smiled and nodded at Roy, quick to note that he was no ordinary workman. He looked surprised, but he said nothing and passed into the house, leaving the two men on the porch.

"Eef all men vas like him," said Schultz, looking after the doctor's retreating figure, "dere vould be no strikes. He's one of de right sort, devotes ees life to doing gute. Ven my first paby died, I vas just peginning. I had used up my last cent. Do you know

vat he dit? He dit not vant payment for his services, und in de pargain he brought us de medicine he prescribed. Can you beat dat? Can you imagine a steel president doing dat? Oh, de dogs! De dogs! dey'll pay for it!" he growled, reverting to his favorite bête noir.

Presently, Dr. Brunner reappeared, followed by Mrs. Schultz, whose buxom face was all smiles, and by Eunice, to whom the physician paid particular attention. In that remote spot, situated several miles from the city and the residential districts of the well-to-do, and settled almost exclusively by the working classes, it was something of a novelty to meet a woman with well-bred manners and of obvious refinement and culture, so while Dr. Brunner talked with the mother about her little girl, he looked over her shoulder at Eunice.

- "The child's all right," he was saying. "It's just a little tonsilitis. Give her the gargle and to-morrow she'll be running about as usual." Turning directly to Eunice, he said, "How do you like living at Glendale, Mrs. Marshall?"
- "Oh, we like it very well," answered Eunice. "I love the country; and besides, it is convenient for my husband."
- "So you're a steel maker?" said the doctor, eyeing Roy with interest. He was wondering what impulse had attracted this young man, evidently of good fam-



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ily, to bury himself and his young wife in this wilderness.

"Yes," replied Roy. "I'm learning the business. It's as good as any other—perhaps better if one makes a strike."

"That's right," replied the doctor. "The steel men are making fortunes."

"Not de steel men—you mean de bosses!" growled Schultz. "De men only make a scanty living. De bosses take it all!"

"Well, well, we won't argue that," laughed the doctor, knowing the foreman's weak point. Then turning to go, he lifted his hat to the women and said:

"Good day, ladies—I hope you won't need me, but if you do——"

"Oh, Herr Doctor, Mrs. Marshall vill need you soon," blurted out Schultz. "She's expecting de stork."

Eunice blushed and hid her face on Roy's shoulder while the foreman and his wife laughed.

"That's good news," smiled the doctor to Roy. "Well, don't forget to let me know when you want me."

He raised his hat once more and entering his buggy, drove off.

A few days later Roy kept his long-standing promise



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and, having obtained permission from Supt. Smith, took Eunice through the works. He was eager as an enthusiastic boy to show her the wonders of steel making, proud to let her gaze upon the awe-inspiring spectacle in which he himself played a part. To Eunice, accustomed now to be alone day after day, this little excursion was a novel experience and she tripped along clinging to Roy's arm with the exuberant joy of a child being taken to the circus.

When they entered the works, passing through the great gates from the high road, Eunice was bewildered at first by the turmoil and confusion. The noise was deafening—the shouting of orders, warning cries as trains of cars shot by laden with coal, the escape of steam, the thunderous blows of giant hammers, the pumping of pistons and incessant whir of every conceivable kind of labor-saving machinery.

They were threading their way through a perfect labyrinth of buildings and outhouses, the special nature of each of which Roy explained. In the large building on the left, they made nickel-steel armorplate, the massive ingots of red-hot metal, often weighing a hundred tons each, being carried here and there with amazing ease, by gigantic cranes worked by electricity, and the soft steel pressed into the shape desired by hydraulic machines of prodigious power. Yonder on the right one saw the complete evolution of a steel rail from the crude piece of pig iron to the finished

rail ready to be laid down on a track. After coming from the "mixer" the molten steel was poured from the "converter" into ingot moulds standing ready on little trains. The cars then ran to the heating pits where the red-hot ingots were kept until ready for the rolling mill, a sort of giant wringing machine where, one at a time, the hot ingots were whisked under powerful rollers which rolled the dough-like metal until it reached the proper length and thinness. The now elongated rail was then rushed over rollers to the hot saws which, revolving with terrific speed, cut off both ends simultaneously, producing a dazzling display of multicolored sparks. Once more the rail was seized, passed through a cold rolling machine, which hardened it, and then it was left to cool and have holes drilled in the end.

"How wonderful!" murmured Eunice, fascinated by all she saw and heard. Close at hand were the boiler plants, the engine houses, and the pumping plants. In a corner of the yard she noticed an enormous mountain of some shiny substance to which every now and then ran little trains of cars. She asked what it was.

"That is ore," answered Roy. "There's nearly half a million tons of the stuff piled up there." Then pointing to some distance away where ten lofty chimneys soared to the sky, he added: "That's where it all goes. Those ten chimneys are the blast furnaces.

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They eat up ten tons of ore every minute. Just think of it—six hundred tons an hour! Every now and then the furnaces are tapped and the molten iron flows into large cars which are drawn by locomotives to the 'mixer.'"

"What is a 'mixer'?" demanded Eunice, remembering he had used the word before.

"Why," answered Roy, "it's a great iron box with a capacity of holding about three hundred tons of molten metal. The metal from all the furnaces is poured into it, and the contents mixed by rocking so the contents become uniform in quality. Then part of the fiery liquid is poured out into other ladle cars and taken to the Bessemer converter, where it is blown into steel. I'm going to take you now to see the converter at work. It is the most wonderful spectacle you ever saw."

He led the way, dragging Eunice after him. She was too much interested to talk, clinging to her husband's arm as though afraid, if she relinquished her grip, that some of those great revolving wheels would catch her up and fling her into the caldrons of splashing, sparkling metal. She shuddered as she reflected what one false step might mean to any one of the hundreds of men employed there. To fall in a vat of molten metal—to be shrivelled up instantly, not a bone, not a vestige remaining. What a horrible fate!

And to think her own husband ran this risk! She was sorry now that he had entered the business.

Strenuous activity reigned in all the yards and shops. The pace set by the most energetic among the workmen was never allowed to slacken. The whir of machinery and dull, monotonous roar of human industry resembled the loud hum of a swarm of bees combing honey in an immense hive. Gangs of workmen hurried here and there, executing swiftly and expertly orders given by foremen considerably their juniors. Everywhere, smooth-faced boys were in command over veterans. Eunice asked the reason.

"Oh, age doesn't count here," smiled Roy; "men are given positions according to their ability. That is the policy of the company. Old-fashioned ideas of apprenticeship don't go here. Enthusiasm receives the honors that used to be given to experience. thousand veteran workmen are practically under the orders of men little older than myself. Supt. Smith is in charge of the whole plant and he is, in fact, the backbone of the whole thing, but he plans each day's campaign like a general directing military operations from headquarters. The execution of his orders he leaves to younger men. Do you see that man coming? That's Harvey. You remember I spoke to you about him. He's only just thirty, but he's a born leader in the steel business. Everybody says he'll be partner some day. I'll introduce you."

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"Hello, Harvey!"

The man thus accosted turned sharply, and for a moment seemed displeased at being halted. He had important work on hand and in steel making every moment was precious. But seeing a lady with Roy, his face relaxed. He advanced toward them, removing his hat.

"I am showing my wife over the plant," explained Roy. Then turning to Eunice, he said, "This is Mr. Harvey, dear. He's an important man here and has been very good to me."

Eunice extended her hand, smiling.

"Thank you, Mr. Harvey. If you're good to Roy you're a friend of mine."

"Oh, please don't," protested Mr. Harvey. "It's delightful of course to be counted among your friends, but I haven't deserved it on the score you mention. Roy's a pretty good fellow, we all like him and he's going to make his mark in the steel business. He already knows more than I did when I came here."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" cried Eunice, pleased.

Harvey was a handsome, aristocratic-looking man, with a dark, almost swarthy complexion, and a small black mustache, carefully trimmed. He was well dressed and Eunice noticed that, despite the rough nature of his occupation, his hands were white and well-shaped as a woman's, and that he wore several rings. Both his manner and dress struck her as fop-

pish. She had always despised such men and instinctively she took an immediate dislike to him. He was friendly enough and he had said nice things about Roy, but there was something in the bold glance of his black eyes, something in the soft dulcet tones of his voice, which she did not like. She had always identified such eves and such a voice with crafty. treacherous people. Yet it was easy to see what had attracted Roy to the man. He had that air of impudent self-assurance which is often mistaken for ability and strength of character. He was also well educated and a man of refinement, standing in this respect above the other men at the works, and he had displayed such a genius for steel making that he was climbing with phenomenal rapidity to the top of the ladder. It was not surprising that a man of his stamp should appeal to Roy.

"I'm going to show her the converter."

"Yes," said Mr. Harvey, his eyes seeking those of Eunice as if essaying their power on them. "Mrs. Marshall will like that. I can see by her face that the beautiful always appeals to her."

There was nothing offensive in the words, but the manner in which they were said and the man's persistent stare annoyed Eunice. Mr. Harvey touched his hat and they moved on.

As they proceeded a distant roar broke upon Eunice's ear. It was a weird, rushing sound as if a dozen

tempests had been unchained at once. Instinctively, she clung tighter to Roy's arm.

"What is it?" she inquired timidly.

"That's the famous Bessemer converter. Now you're going to see something worth while."

They entered a low, oblong-shaped building, gloomy within despite its many windows. The floor was covered with a network of car tracks running in every direction. Overhead were gigantic electric cranes and pulleys. Workmen—swarthy Hungarians, bearded Poles—most of them half-naked—toiled silently, methodically and swiftly. Roy pointed to the centre of the floor where stood a huge iron pot about twelve feet high and six feet round, swung on an axle. Its weight was prodigious, but it was so nicely balanced that a child could tilt it up and down.

"That is the converter—watch!" he said.

She saw a little train of ladle cars filled with molten iron run up to the pot. A workman tilted the converter and twenty thousand pounds of fiery liquid were emptied into it. The converter righted again and almost simultaneously from hundreds of small apertures in the great pot's bottom, a terrific blast of compressed air was turned on. The air rushed through the metal with the fury of a cyclone, sending out in its passage a shower of sparks of all colors, while the converter roared like Vesuvius in full eruption.

Eunice stood spellbound. She could not imagine anything more fascinating or beautiful.

"The air blows the impurities out of the iron and the result is steel," explained Roy. "The entire process takes little more than fifteen minutes. Then it is poured into the ingot moulds and taken to the other shops to be pressed into shape. That part of it you have seen. Come, let's go."

As they left the works and took the road leading to Glendale, Eunice said:

- "I'm glad I've seen the works, but I'm sorry I met Mr. Harvey."
- "Sorry—why?" exclaimed Roy, looking at her in surprise.
- "I don't like him," said Eunice decisively. "I am quick to form estimates of people and I am seldom wrong. There was something about the man that I didn't like."
- "Oh, you're wrong, dear, quite wrong," protested Roy. "He's a bully good chap and he's going to be very useful to me."

Eunice said nothing more and in a few minutes they were home again.

CHAPTER VII

HEN the baby came. A new odor permeated the cottage, driving out the persistent smell of fresh paint—an odor of violet powder, milk and talcum—and to gladden the eye there were visions of white linen, dainty lace and ribbons. Three months had gone by since the visit to the works, and the arrival of the little stranger had been expected daily. Following a custom observed in some of the northern countries of Europe, they had left a window open each night so that the stork might enter without knocking, and, right on time, the noble bird flew in at an early hour one morning, carrying its precious burden, arriving almost simultaneously with Dr. Brunner, whom Roy had hurriedly gone for to be present at the joyous occasion.

He was a lively youngster, absurdly like Roy, and presenting many of the characteristics of a boiled lobster. Roy was afraid to lift him, for fear he might break in two like some fragile doll, but baby seemed lusty enough judging by his lungs, which he exercised day and night, much to the discomfiture of Herr Schultz next door, whose honest slumbers the incessant wailing disturbed. Eunice and Roy thought it the sweetest music they had ever heard.

Eunice's happiness was now complete. This coming of a child was the supreme test of her womanhood, and it had not found her wanting. She had accepted eagerly all the trials, inconveniences and discomforts of child-bearing with the same cheerfulness and sanguine optimism which she had shown during the first dreary months of their married life in New York, when, deprived of her husband's companionship, the future dark and unsettled, she found there were responsibilities and duties in life as well as joys.

The delight of Roy at being a father was unbounded. It was almost pathetic. He insisted on dragging Herr Schultz out of bed to come and look at his son, he stopped on the streets every one he knew only slightly to tell them the news; five minutes after the morning whistle blew every workman in the Excelsior plant knew of the momentous happening. A little more and Roy would have shut the shops, put out the fires and announced a general holiday in celebration of the event. He also despatched a long letter to his mother at Alton Court.

Taking a day off, he went to the village and bought out almost the entire contents of a toy shop, carrying home rocking-horses, balloons, tin soldiers, Noah's arks, which he carried in triumph back to the cottage, depositing them in a heap near the tiny lump of pink humanity now slumbering peacefully at its mother's breast.

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- "Can he see?" he questioned Eunice fearfully.
- "Of course he can see," answered Eunice, with mock indignation. "What a question!"
- "Do you suppose he knows I'm his father?" persisted Roy, examining baby's fingers to see if they were all there.
 - "What shall we call him?" asked Eunice.

Roy began to think hard. He saw at once the importance of naming the child right. So much depends on a name! Shakespeare was all wrong when he asked contemptuously, "What's in a name?" Montgomery certainly sounded more euphonious than Todd, and Gwendolin was more recherché than Bridget.

"Peter, John, Robert, Arthur, Lionel, Theodore—Theodore Marshall, that sounds pretty good. We'll call him Theodore—Teddy for short. How's that, dear?"

Eunice liked Theodore, so the momentous question was settled.

With a baby in the house, the Marshall cottage took on the aspect of a real home. During the young mother's convalescence, Mrs. Schultz and other neighbors dropped in every day to render what services they could, and never before had Eunice felt herself surrounded by so many friends. These, she felt, were not fair-weather friends, ready to run away at the first appearance of trouble, as was usually the case

in more fashionable circles, but true-hearted, sympathetic women who would willingly have shared their last dollar with her had she needed it.

Roy was making steady progress at the works. He had been promoted several times, and was getting twice as much money as when he started. They were able, therefore, to afford several little luxuries that were beyond their means when they first moved to Glendale. They had a girl named Katy who did the kitchen work and took the baby out, and they were able to save a little in the bank.

So the days, weeks and months passed, Roy and Eunice tasting the sweets of almost perfect human happiness, she finding it in the exquisite joy of early motherhood and the companionship of her husband, he interested all day in his work and returning tired at night to the domestic pleasures that awaited him at home. He usually reached the house about six o'clock, and his home-coming was the most welcome hour of the day for Eunice. She would sit on the porch with the baby in her arms, waiting for him long before he came in sight, and when at last he came up the garden walk two pairs of arms were extended to greet him. After supper, in the summer evenings, he would water the lawn or attend to the vegetable garden, which Eunice had been compelled to neglect, or, when the nights grew shorter, he would sit by the lamp in the parlor and read, while his wife sang baby

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to sleep. Eunice possessed the much-coveted piano, hired by the month in Pittsburg, and Roy often brought her an armful of the latest books and magazines, so she was not entirely deprived of recreation or of the intellectual pleasures of life. These inexpensive luxuries added much to her happiness and contentment.

Most men, and most women, too, for that matter, would have chafed under the monotony of such a hermit life, such complete seclusion from the world. They would long for the excitement and gavety of the big cities, the attractions offered by the theatres and society. But no such regrets ever entered their thoughts. To Eunice this quiet, almost idyllic, existence seemed like a haven of refuge after what she had gone through. Here at least she was her own mistress, living with a husband and child, who were all she had in the world, having all the comforts she needed. Roy, on his part, was too much engrossed in his work to wish for anything else. He liked the business he was now engaged in, and by devoting all his time and energy to it, he expected one day to reap a substantial reward. He had set out to accomplish something, and he intended to see it through.

They were well liked by the Glendale people. In fact, there was not a woman in the place more popular than Eunice. At first her neighbors rather held aloof. They were quick to see that the new comers were

gentlefolk, and young Mrs. Marshall had all the airs of the "fine lady," but gradually this distrust of her wore off. She was unaffected and sincere, amiable and kind-hearted, she always had a smile for everybody; if any one was sick she was the first to call and see what little service she could render. As for the children, they fairly adored her. She encouraged them to come to the house, gave them little parties on the garden lawn, dressed dolls for the girls and let the boys romp and shout to their heart's content. If any mother missed her child she was sure to find it at Mrs. Marshall's.

One day, some time after the advent of little Teddy, a great surprise awaited Roy when he reached home. Eunice was at her accustomed post with baby, but with her was another, a young girl whom he did not recognize from afar. Suddenly the stranger started to run toward him, and before he knew it her arms were around his neck.

- "Don't you know me, Roy?" she cried.
- "Grace!" he ejaculated. "Where on earth did you spring from?"

As they walked to the house, his sister explained. She was on a visit to a friend in Philadelphia, and had taken advantage of being so near to run down and see them. She had got the address from the letter Roy wrote his mother. She was so anxious to

see the baby that she simply could not resist the impulse. But nobody at home knew of her coming.

Roy was delighted to see his old playmate, and eagerly questioned her about what had happened at Alton Court since his departure.

His father was still bitterly incensed against him, she said, and was now looking for a rich wife for his brother Ned, who would become partner in Marshall & Co. As for Miss Merrick, she was the same as ever, more disagreeable if anything and still as devoted to her terrier Violet.

Grace was overjoyed to see Eunice again. Girllike, she went into raptures over everything, thought the house the cutest little place she had ever seen, and baby a perfect treasure. If ever she married, she declared, she would like just such a house.

Eunice smiled indulgently while Roy, brother-like, put a damper on her enthusiasm.

"Sis," he said, "you're talking bosh. Eunice and I are living this way because we have to and because we like to. But it wouldn't suit you at all after the first novelty of it wore off."

He told her how happy and contented they were, that he had not regretted his marriage for a single moment, and that Eunice had proved just what he expected—a help and inspiration. He had made a blunder wasting time in journalism, but he had now found his true vocation. He was becoming more

expert as a steel maker every day, and the company officers had already given him to understand they considered him a valuable man, besides demonstrating their good-will by doubling his salary.

Grace stayed with them for two days, making the house so much brighter with her girlish merriment that Eunice was sorry when she was gone.

Then their life went on as before, Roy absent all day at the steel works, Eunice dividing her attention between her baby and her household duties. They did not see much of their neighbors the Schultzes. Of late, Eunice had noticed a certain coolness on the part of the foreman's wife, and she had been unable to explain the reason. One afternoon while she was on the porch Mrs. Schultz passed and Eunice stopped her.

"Why haven't you been in to see me?" she asked. "I haven't seen you for an age."

Mrs. Schultz looked embarrassed, and coming up to the stoop muttered something about being busy.

"How's the baby?" she asked.

Master Teddy was sitting on the floor, beating a tattoo with his hands and feet, and surrounded by the toys a fond father showered upon him. Mrs. Schultz patted him on the head, but he did not appreciate the attention, for he set up a howl. Eunice said:

"Only last night I said to Roy, 'I wonder what has become of the Schultzes. We see nothing of them."

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- "Vell, it vos dis way—" stammered her neighbor.
 "Your husbant dinks one way and my husband dinks anoder."
 - "What do you mean?" demanded Eunice, surprised.
- "Aboud de drouble at de vorks," answered Mrs. Schultz.
- "Trouble at the works?" repeated Eunice. "What trouble?"
- "Mr. Marshall didn't dell you?" asked Mrs. Schultz incredulously.
- "No, he told me nothing—that is, nothing unusual. What is it?"
- "Vat?" exclaimed Mrs. Schultz. "He didn't dell you dat de vorks may close down any day, und de men go out on strike?"
 - "A strike!" echoed Eunice in dismay.
- "Ya, a strike," repeated Mrs. Schultz. "De men are determined dis time. Dey are strong, und de bosses vill have to give dem vot dey ask. Vill your husband go out mit de rest," she demanded suspiciously, "or is he mit de bosses?"
- "How do I know?" stammered Eunice, not knowing what to say. "I know nothing about it. Roy has not told me. He possibly did not want to worry me. I'll ask him to-night."

Mrs. Schultz turned to go.

"I shouldn't dink he'd be a scab—such a nice man! But Schultz has his doubts. He says he's too dick mit Mr. Harvey and dat crowd to vant to side mit de real vorkmen. He's not in our class. Neider is you," she added bitterly.

"I know nothing about it," repeated Eunice help-lessly. "He has said nothing to me. I suppose he'll do what's right."

"I hope it is so," said Mrs. Schultz, going; "but Schultz says he's ambitious to climb to de top und become a partner. Eef it comes to a fight, he'd go back on de men and side mit de bosses."

That evening when Roy came home Eunice broached the matter of the impending strike. He seemed annoyed that she knew about it.

"I didn't tell you, dear," he explained, "because I did not want to worry you. I don't suppose it will come to anything. A few hotheads like Schultz are trying to force an issue on the question of wages. Formerly the skilled workmen were paid on a permanent yearly basis, then the company introduced a sliding scale of wages, the intention being that the wages should correspond with the earnings of the business. The men accepted this, but the company now refuses to renew the old contract. Hence the trouble. The Union," he added, "is threatening to shut up the works and all that sort of thing, but I don't think it will amount to anything."

"But if it does come to an open rupture," queried

Eunice, "what would you do? What side would you be on?"

"As far as I can judge," said Roy, "the company is in the right. It seems entirely fair that the wages should be scaled according to the earnings. lieve in organized labor when it is to protect the workmen from the injustice of unscrupulous capitalists. But there is nothing of the kind here. It is simply a case of an enormously powerful body presuming on its strength to dictate terms to the employers. relations of employers and employed must be regulated on terms equitable to both or all industrial enterprises would be paralyzed. The Union is using its power to make unreasonable demands, and so loses the sympathy of impartial observers. Unfortunately, the average workman does not reason impartially. He has paid his dues regularly to the Union, and he does not think he is getting his money's worth unless there is a scrap. If the strike order comes, the men are certain to go out. I am not a member of the Union, so I am free to act as I think fit. If the order comes I shall stick to the company. Don't you think I'm right?"

Eunice reflected for a moment, and then said:

"If the men are wrong and the company is right, most assuredly your duty is to the company."

CHAPTER VIII

The grumbling of the men appeared to be subsiding like the distant rumbling of a thunder-storm passing off in another direction. The grievances of the men were apparently forgotten, the Union was less aggressive in its attitude, and the best friends of both capital and labor were sanguine that a conflict would be averted.

Roy had been in the employ of the Excelsior Steel Company considerably over a year, and he had every reason to be satisfied with the progress made. He had mastered with extraordinary ease and rapidity all that metallurgy had to teach, and now was not only regarded as an expert in every branch of steel making, but was generally looked upon as a rising man in the affairs of the company. His thorough knowledge of mechanics had proved of incalculable service to him, enabling him to suggest a number of improvements that were of the utmost value and importance to the plant. This service alone would have made him indispensable to his employers, but, in addition, the immense enthusiasm he put into his work did not fail to attract their attention. Superintendent

Smith had made this special report on him: "Very useful man, with a positive genius for managing men and machinery." This came to the notice of John Armstrong himself, and thenceforth Roy Marshall was a marked man. His salary was increased immediately to ten dollars a day, and he was afforded every opportunity to give further evidence of his ability.

The Excelsior plant was still in furious competition with other steel makers, and the company exhausted every resource, strained every nerve to keep ahead of its rivals. It needed just such men as Roy Marshall-young, able, enthusiastic-who could set a fast pace to maintain the record. John Armstrong, a marvel of business sagacity and diplomacy, secured order after order from under the noses of his competitors, and then it was up to his workmen to execute them. Business was never so active, orders for armorplate, structural steel, steel rails, were pouring in from all parts of the world. Work went on uninterruptedly day and night, the shrieking of the converter, the pounding of the giant hammers, the roaring of the furnaces being incessant throughout the twenty-four The company was now turning out one-sixth of all the steel manufactured in the United States. Mr. Miller, manager for Mr. Armstrong, estimated that the profits for the current year would exceed two million dollars!

Roy's position in the works was now fully as important as that held by Leonard Harvey, with whom he was still on the most friendly terms. Both men showed conspicuous ability, although each displayed his power in a different way. Roy was the more popular. All the men, from Superintendent Smith down to the most humble furnace tender, liked him. Always approachable, and hail-fellow-well-met, he was far more successful in getting the best results out of the men than was Harvey, whose attitude was stern and unyielding. With Harvey the men were nothing; only the results were important. Roy, on the contrary, took the ground that the men must be cared for in order to get results.

The enormous responsibility put upon him could not fail to develop and mould Roy's character. From the inexperienced beginner timidly picking his way among the shoals of life, in constant danger of shipwreck like a vessel hugging a rocky coast, he emerged with almost startling rapidity into the alert, resourceful, broad-minded man, sure of himself, whose every act and word, based upon long experience, is deliberate and masterful.

No one noticed the change in him quicker than Eunice, and she rejoiced to see it. Was it not a victory for her, the realization of her own hope and prophecy? Had she not always insisted that Roy had in him the making of a splendid manhood if his en-

ergies and talents were directed in the proper channel, if his life were surrounded by the right influences? The only thing she regretted about his success at the steel works was that it had led to greater intimacy with Leonard Harvey. The two men were on a more equal footing now, and naturally saw more of each other. Eunice had not seen Mr. Harvey since that day of the visit to the works, but Roy often spoke of him in terms which led her to suppose he thought a good deal of him. She understood, of course, that it was inevitable that two young men, of the same social position and education, engaged in the same business with equal success, should have a great deal in common. Indeed, it would have been strange if it were not so. Yet Eunice was sorry. She had not overcome the dislike she had taken to the man, and she could not believe he could have any good influence over her husband. In fact, everything she learned about him, either directly from Roy or from the Schultzes, who detested him, confirmed this impres-He was said to be a leader in one of the fast circles of Pittsburg's social life, then beginning to ape the feverish gayety and license of the larger cities, and at the works he was feared rather than loved. being generally tyrannical and unsympathetic with his men. One day, she was told, an important order for structural steel, of which Harvey had charge, had to be rushed through for contract time delivery. An

expert workman, engaged on the job, went to Harvey and, explaining that his mother was dying, asked for a few hours' leave of absence. Having regard only for the important work on hand, Harvey curtly refused permission, and the woman died without seeing her son. The men never forgave him that.

But while Roy admired Harvey for the possession of those qualities which had put him, like himself, in one of the most responsible positions in the Excelsior plant, his interest in him ended there. Time and again Harvey had invited him to dine with him at his Pittsburg club or to spend an evening at the theatre. He had always refused—because no club dinner or theatre could give him the same degree of joy that awaited him on his return to the little cottage at Glendale. He sometimes felt that this was perhaps a selfish view to take, since Harvey's interest in him, the meeting with other men, going out in the world, would be likely to advance him in his business, but when he argued this with himself, he could always see before him Eunice's wistful gray eyes, and in their serene depths he read disapproval. He knew that she would be at her accustomed place watching for him. Each evening after he had turned the corner she would hasten to run and meet him, little Teddy trotting along at her side, clutching her skirts. He could not bear the thought of their disappointment if he failed to come home at the usual hour.

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This domestic life of perfect content and happiness was the only one Roy had a taste for. On summer nights after supper, when baby had been put to bed and left in charge of Katy, they would go for a long stroll, or if the weather was bad they sat indoors, Eunice at her piano or busy with needlework, Roy reading or working on plans of some new mechanical device which would save thousands of dollars more to the company. At other times he would take Teddy on his knee and show the delighted youngster all kinds of tricks, or go down on his knees and play horse, until the house rang with the music of childish laughter.

One day Roy left the works a few minutes later than usual. It had been a particularly trying day, a number of things had gone wrong, as they are apt to do when once they begin badly, and he was tired out. He had also had all day an ill-defined feeling of depression which he had been unable to account for or shake off, and he was the more uneasy because he could not help connecting it with his home. For this reason, he was anxious to get back to Glendale early. He hurried along the road, running almost the entire way, impatient to see the familiar figures of his wife and Teddy after he turned the bend. He reached the corner and his heart sank. They were not there. Something serious must have happened to keep her indoors on such a beautiful evening. givings were well founded. Something had happened.

Now really alarmed, he hurried to the house. Not a sound was to be heard. He broke into a perspiration—a horrible feeling of impending calamity came over him. The last time he had felt like that was when he had stood, uncovered, within the dark, clammy walls of the New York morgue. He opened the door and went in. Eunice came to meet him, her face was grave.

"What's the matter?" he demanded.

She placed her finger to her lips, and in the uncertain light he noticed that she looked as if she had been crying.

"Hush! He's sleeping now. Don't wake him. He's sick. I hope it nothing. I've sent Katy for Dr. Brunner."

"Why didn't you send for me?" said Roy.

"I didn't like to worry you. It came on suddenly. He complained of feeling sick. His skin was dry and hot. Oh, it's nothing, I'm sure. His little stomach is upset."

But her looks belied her. She was visibly anxious, if not alarmed.

"When will the doctor come?"

"I don't know. He was out and Katy left word."

"I'll get him."

The next instant Roy was footing it to Dr. Brunner's at the rate of six miles an hour. He half ran, half walked, anxiety and worry lending him wings.

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He found Dr. Brunner just getting ready to come to their house, so the two men returned together. The physician had the reputation of being a quick and accurate diagnostician. He had hardly glanced at the child when he uttered an exclamation and drew aside its night shirt.

- "Look!" he said.
- "What?" cried Eunice and Roy, simultaneously and apprehensively.
 - "Scarlet fever!"

He pointed to the fine network of red rash spread over the child's whole body. Eunice grasped Roy's hand convulsively, while he set his teeth hard. Was it possible that sickness had come to disturb their happiness?

"There's nothing to be alarmed at," said the doctor.

"A few days will tell how severe the attack is going to be. Meantime, don't worry."

Advice is cheap. Those who have nothing to lose find it easy to risk it. The young mother and father, seeing their first-born stricken with a dreaded and dangerous disease, found small comfort in such consolation. Eunice did not like to speak, lest she betray what she felt. A great lump seemed to be in her throat. It was her first baby, all she had in the world beside her husband, and the idea that some unknown peril threatened to rob her of her joy was unbearable. Scalding tears filled her eyes as she

turned to obey the doctor's orders. Roy felt as badly, but he did not show it, his being one of those reserved natures, common among men, which suffer internally abominably, yet with face unmoved, ashamed to show weakness, like the ancient Stoics.

But it was not a mild attack, and when the doctor called again he looked grave. The child, he said, was seriously ill, but they must hope for the best. They must watch him day and night and he must have a nurse. He would send for one from Pittsburg. Roy and Eunice listened in silence, clasping each other's hands in mute despair.

The professional nurse arrived the following morning. She was one of those quiet, refined women, so attractive in their neat uniform, who combine the expertness of a physician with the gentleness of a mother and do credit to their merciful guild. She watched all night by baby's cot, Eunice taking her place in the daytime.

Then began that dreadful period of suspense, hope, doubt, and uncertainty which precedes the crisis of the disease, one moment bringing a slight improvement, then a decided change for the worse. The distracted father and mother watched wearily at the bedside, snatching such moments to eat and drink as they could. In the early stages of the illness Roy continued to go to the works, although he might just as well have stayed away. He was too worried to

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be fit for work, his mind was elsewhere, and he could not wait till the time came when he could run home and relieve his exhausted wife. As the crisis drew nearer, he obtained leave of absence, and remained all day and all night in the sick-room.

Dr. Brunner was doing everything that human skill and long experience could suggest to save the child's life, but in spite of his efforts Teddy was visibly sinking every hour. Roy, now thoroughly alarmed, insisted on calling in another physician. Eunice was too prostrated to take any initiative. Dr. Brunner called in a colleague from Pittsburg-a gaunt, melancholy man who was a specialist in infantile diseases. rectly he saw the child he shook his head. After a thorough examination he retired to another room to consult with Dr. Brunner, while the parents waited with blanched faces and sinking hearts, as might two criminals at the bar, standing in the shadow of the scaffold, awaiting the verdict of the jury that would either acquit them or send them to the gallows. When, finally, the two doctors emerged, the expression on their faces told them plainly enough.

"He's got a fighting chance," said Dr. Brunner.

"We hope for the best, but you must be prepared for the worst."

Roy and Eunice were overwhelmed at the catastrophe which threatened them. Could it be possible, Eunice asked herself, that her baby was going to die?

Why had God sent her such an angelic gift if she were only to be robbed of it? It was too cruel, too impossible! And in a flood of passionate tears she flung herself on her knees by the little white cot, praying as she had never prayed before that her child's life might be spared.

Roy, more of a materialist, recognized in this misfortune only the working of ruthless nature, which went blindly on its way, crushing mothers' hearts, stopping at nothing, deaf to everything save its own immutable laws. Their baby was an infinitesimal atom, a grain of sand, blown this way or that on the winds of fate. What matter to Dame Nature if a baby died? To-morrow she would produce a thousand babies, as chubby and beautiful. She took no heed of any particular baby. That was the inexorable decree—birth and death!

Ah, it was easy to argue, but only cold comfort was to be had from it. To little Teddy's heartbroken parents, their baby was something more than a mere atom of life, easily to be replaced. It had twined itself round their hearts, its dimpled smile and merry laughter had kindled a flame in their lives that only time could dim.

Exhausted from long vigils, her eyes swollen from constant weeping. Eunice had thrown herself on a sofa in the adjoining room, dozing fitfully. Roy sat helplessly in the sick-room, watching every move-

ment of the nurse, who hovered over the little cot. Suddenly the child moved and he got up to see what was the matter. The nurse had preceded him.

"He is restless," she said. "It is the fever."

Once more she went to take the temperature. The last record had touched 105. They were among the rocks. A further advance would be fatal.

Roy could not bear to watch. Each time he looked at the drawn, emaciated little face, with its great wondering eyes, haggard and weary-looking like an old man's, he with difficulty choked back a sob. A little life, barely launched in the world, was hanging by a thread. Every moment the faint flicker of vitality might be snuffed out, like the extinguishing of a candle in the breeze. He listened to the faint breathing, which was short, and so weak as to be almost imperceptible.

"What is it?" demanded Roy, as she laid the thermometer down. He asked the question, yet dreaded to hear the answer.

"The temperature has gone to 106," replied the nurse, recording it on her chart.

When Dr. Brunner came he at once insisted on heroic measures. The child could not live with such a temperature. They must reduce it with the ice-bath. It was a desperate resource. It killed or cured.

It seemed cruel, but a human life was at stake. They took the child from the warm bed and placed it naked

in a tub filled with cracked ice. The temperature fell immediately, and presently they took the baby back to the cot. He lay quite still, his eyes closed, breathing convulsively.

"He will be like that for some time," said the doctor. "The temperature is now artificially down to normal. If it rises moderately there is hope. If it rises rapidly past 105 the end will come quickly."

The doctor went away, and Roy and the nurse began their lonely vigil, the heavy silence being broken only by the ticking of the clock and the spasmodic breathing of the dying child. Presently the door opened, and Eunice, pale, hollow-eyed, staggered to the cribside. The baby looked considerably worse than before she had gone to sleep, and her mother's instinct at once detected the change.

"He's worse!" she said in a hoarse whisper to Roy.
Roy nodded and explained what had been done.
This was the crisis. He would die to-night or live.

"Oh, my baby, my poor baby!" moaned Eunice, and for two hours she sat there, motionless, paying attention neither to the nurse nor to Roy, watching the hectic flush and the quivering lips of her dying child, a pathetic picture of human helplessness before the decree of inscrutable Nature.

100—101—102—103—104—105, slowly but surely the mercury rose. The stillness in the room was oppressive as the three watched. All one heard was the

ticking of the clock and a low moan which every now and then broke from Eunice, who had sunk into a chair. The hours went by this way. Roy heard a clock outside strike four.

Suddenly a low gurgling sound came from the little crib. The nurse bent forward and then came quickly to Roy.

"You had better take her away," she said. "I will call you."

He knew what she meant. It was the end. He was surprised to find how calmly he took it. He expected he would burst out weeping. If he only could, he felt it would relieve him. But he could not. There was only a dreadful feeling of a leaden weight around his heart. He put his arm about Eunice.

"Come, dear. Baby's going to sleep."

Eunice lifted her wan, tear-stained face to his, not understanding.

"Come, dear," he repeated. "We will come back."

He assisted her to her feet, and with his arms still about her she went docilely with him from the sick-room into the parlor, where they sat together on the sofa by the window, waiting for the close of the tragedy they were powerless to avert, watching the streaks of gray which arose slowly in the east, enveloping the meadows, the trees, every object on the horizon, in a ghostly mantle. A heavy stillness reigned, not a bird twittered, not a frog croaked; only

the leaves on the trees moved, stirred gently by the rising wind, which sounded like a mournful dirge. It was a scene of utter abandonment and desolation, as though Nature herself sorrowed at her own handiwork.

Half an hour passed. Day was breaking, every outline in the dark room grew more distinct. Eunice, utterly worn out, had fallen asleep.

"Mr. Marshall!"

Roy started. Who called him? A cold chill ran through him. Was it the dreaded summons?

"Mr. Marshall!"

It was the nurse. She stood on the threshold, beckoning him. In her white cap and apron she looked like some angel summoning him to appear before the final tribunal. Almost mechanically, he rose and followed her back to the sick-room. Eunice, still asleep, was mercifully unconscious of what was passing.

"What is it?" he whispered to the nurse in an awestricken whisper.

"He is dead!" she said.

Roy turned to go. He could not bear to look again on that tired, wan face—the face of his dead child, the child he had loved and played with. Choking, he groped his way back to Eunice. Discovering his absence, she had risen. He took her silently in his arms. Nothing was said. There was nothing to say. He kissed her pale face, wet with countless tears, as she hung limp and half unconscious in his arms, moaning:

[&]quot;My baby! My poor baby!"

CHAPTER IX

VIME, the great and merciful healer, gradually lessened the force of the blow of baby's death, from which Eunice and Roy thought they could never recover. During the first few months the young parents were inconsolable. It seemed to them that they had nothing left to live for. To a greater extent even than they themselves suspected, their baby had become an inseparable part of their lives and it was only when they lost him that they fully realized how happy and proud they had been to possess him. A dozen objects in the house—his high chair, the little spoon he used, his broken toys and the little black and white kitten which he used to hold up by the tail. constantly reminded them of their bereavement. Eunice's eyes would fill with blinding tears when she came across these precious relics of her darling until Roy, realizing the uselessness of keeping open the painful wound, gradually and unostentatiously put them out of the way. Eunice never asked where they went. She had not the heart to do it herself and she was grateful to Roy for sparing her that much unnecessary pain. So at last, only pussy remained and she, poor forlorn beast, wandered mournfully and aimlessly about the house, as if ever seeking a congenial playmate who was strangely missing.

The strenuous nature of Roy's daily occupation kept his mind too busy to permit it to dwell morbidly on his loss. The day's routine at the steel works had to be gone through, no matter what hearts were breaking, what homes were desolate. Unlike Eunice, he had no religion to turn to for consolation. He refused to see in their misfortune anything but an accident to which all humanity was liable. Organic disease—the ever active and aggressive enemy of life—had seized their innocent baby as a victim and human science had been impotent to save it. The tiny flame of life which their joint love had fanned into being had been snuffed out. Dust had gone back to dust. The child was dead. That was the end.

With Eunice it was different. She believed in a Supreme Being who sees even the fall of the sparrow, and her only consolation was the belief that one day she would see her child again. She could not imagine such a God as pictured by the Church—a man-like God, swayed by human passions of wrath and vengeance. Such a conception of a Deity was only a survival of barbarism, and little different from the monstrous gods worshipped by savage peoples. Religion was the only subject on which she and her husband failed to agree. She refused to accept the materialistic theory that the universe, with its wonderful

order, its complex system, its fixed laws, was merely the organization of blind matter. Can something come from nothing? She firmly believed that somewhere there was a Divine Power who ordained all things. Life, she insisted, was not a blind evolution from protoplasmic cells, but a systematized process organized and perfected by a Supreme Intelligence. Her reason reeled as she tried to comprehend, as she strove vainly to imagine a beginning of and an end to all things. The agnostic who frankly admits: "I do not know," was, she thought, much more reasonable than Roy who insisted that there was but one substance in the universe and that that substance was matter.

During the first few days after the funeral the Schultzes and other neighbors paid formal visits of consolation. Eunice could not refuse to see them, but their endless chatter wearied her. Roy was indignant and wanted to put them out. Such calls, he insisted, showed a lack of consideration. When they were not prompted merely by morbid curiosity, they were a mistaken kindness, their stereotyped phrases affording no real consolation but, on the contrary, usually reopening the wounds which had begun to heal.

But Eunice looked for consolation neither to her neighbors nor to her husband, dearly as she loved. him. On every question relating to their everyday life they agreed perfectly. His tastes, his views, were hers. But in this hour of poignant sorrow, she found

in him no echo of the longing for spiritual comfort that arose in her own soul. So while Roy was away at the works, she went to seek it in the Roman Catholic Church at Pittsburg, not to listen to the idle pratings of sleek, self-satisfied priests, but to sit amid the solemn stillness of the House of God. There, under the lofty dome, amid the smell of incense, organ music and the bell-like voices of the boy choir, her soul felt exalted, sublimated. She felt she was a step nearer heaven, a step nearer her baby. She had no faith in the dogmas of the Church. She loved only its ritual, its mystery, its awe, its beauty. Like many girls who have learned to use their brains. Eunice had little respect for organized religion. She felt that religion was too sacred, too holy, too sublime to be surrounded by the same business tactics that are used in selling potatoes. The traffic in prayers, the renting of pews, the collections of money, the automatic services, the perfunctory singing of hymns, the mere theatrical display, the using of God's temple for pretence and humbug, cloaking rascality, making the church the rendezvous of show and fashion-all this had disillusioned her. Yet she was intelligent enough to recognize that a ready-made religion was necessary for the great masses of the people, unthinking, superstitious, ignorant, ever ready to be driven like sheep, not seeking to know why. Having no rule of conduct of their own, such people would quickly degenerate into unmoral anarchy if the "big stick"—or angry Jehovah as depicted in fearful colors by the Church—were not continually held over their heads. The organized church, founded on the fears of the multitude, treated the people like children incapable of thinking for themselves, assuming the character of the stern parent, the schoolmaster with the rod, the ogre who would punish them if they did wrong. These conditions had not changed even in our own enlightened day. Yet no one more than she knew the comfort of true religion. The problem of life mystified and awed her, and in her moments of great sorrow, at the time of her father's suicide and later when her mother died, she had found indescribable comfort in sitting for hours in the empty, silent church.

Gradually, as the time went by, Eunice recovered her spirits. The color came back to her cheeks and she seemed to be forgetting, much to the delight of Roy, who had been really anxious about her. When the weather permitted, they resumed their evening walks as before.

"We have no one to worry about now," she said sadly. "We've only ourselves."

"That's why we must be good—no more tears or mournful faces," he replied.

"It's hard to forget," she answered simply.

He bent over her and whispered in her ear. She smiled sadly and shook her head.

- "No—no more," she said. "I could not live through such another experience." She was silent for a moment and then she went on: "Roy, I had a terrible dream about you last night."
 - "What had you been eating?"
- "No, seriously, Roy. I must tell you. I have felt wretched ever since."
 - "What was it?"
- "I dreamed that you rose at the works until you became a partner and enormously rich. We gave up our little home and went to live in a palace. And then—"

She hesitated.

- "And then?" demanded Roy.
- "Then you grew tired of me. Wealth gave you a new outlook on life. You grew weary of our old life and of me. Another woman pleased you more and you deserted me."

Roy laughed boisterously.

"What nonsense!" he exclaimed.

They had reached the porch of their house. No one was in sight and Roy folded her in his arms, looking fondly down at the loved, pale face.

"Even if the first part of your dream comes true," he said, "even if we become immensely rich, which sounds like a fairy tale, certainly the *dénouement* your imagination invents is preposterous. Can you imagine my loving another woman better than you, dear?"

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"Not now, perhaps, but if you were very rich, you would be compelled to live differently. We could not continue living here in this simple fashion. You would have many rich friends—or so-called friends—whom you would have to entertain in a style befitting your position. A new world would open before you—a world you have never known." Then after a pause she added: "I should be sorry. I have come to love this little place. It is associated with so many memories, joyous and sad. If you lived differently you would acquire other tastes, you would meet other women who might attract you more than I."

"Never!" he cried, clasping her passionately to his heart. "If I had the gold of Crossus you and you alone would be the one woman in all the world. You are the first woman who awakened love in me. I could never look at another woman and think of her in the same way I do of you. Don't you believe me, Eunice?"

She lay nestling in his arms, feeling secure against the whole world in his strong embrace. What harm could reach her there? After all her sorrow, her husband at least remained to her. They could still be happy together. They were young and life was still before them with bright promise.

Soon after this there occurred stirring events which

served to completely distract the young couple's attention from their own troubles. The labor situation was once more critical and this time matters looked grave. Roy returned from the works one evening and alarmed Eunice by saying that he would not be surprised to see something serious happen any day. Not that they themselves would be immediately inconvenienced in the event of a strike. Roy had been getting a large salary for some time and they had saved a good part of it, but one could never tell how such a fight would end.

For some days past Eunice had noticed unwonted activity in the Schultz cottage. Almost every evening they had a number of men callers, big burly men with loud voices and rough manners, and instead of receiving his visitors on the porch as customary in summer, the German foreman invited them inside, where they sat in a lighted room, with the blinds closely drawn. It was all very mysterious, and Roy had no doubt that his neighbor's house was used by the strike leaders as a secret meeting-place where they could plan the campaign. On the few nights when the cottage was dark, there were big public meetings in the halls in Pittsburg, Schultz and others making inflammatory speeches.

One morning a messenger came up quietly to Roy as he was busy directing a particularly delicate operation in the rolling mill and told him in a low tone that

the manager requested his immediate presence at the office. Roy's first impulse was to send back word that he could not come. To guit his post at such a critical moment might spoil the costly job he was engaged upon and thus entail a loss of thousands of dollars on the company, but on second thought, he said to himself that he could hardly ignore such an urgent summons which he had no doubt was connected with the impending strike. The situation was becoming more acute hourly. The men were assembling in little groups in all the shops and muttering while they worked. The crisis was at hand, and he supposed the Company was preparing to take measures to cope with So he took his hat and coat and followed the man back to Mr. Miller's office, situated near the main entrance to the yards.

When he got there, a dozen men were assembled in Mr. Miller's private room, sitting around a large table. They were all talking earnestly in subdued tones. Every now and again, a speaker's temper would get the better of him and then he would raise his voice and hit the table violently with his fist by way of emphasizing his argument. That the meeting was of extraordinary importance was to be read on the faces of those present, and in the air of suppressed excitement noticeable in the attendants and clerks who passed in and out of the room on tip-toe, and chatted with each other in whispers.

At the head of the table sat a little man with gray hair and full beard whom Roy instantly recognized. from portraits he had seen in the papers, as John Armstrong. This was the first time he had seen the great ironmaster in the life, and it was somewhat of a shock to come thus unprepared face to face with a personage of his distinction. But the Steel King paid no attention to him, being closely absorbed in conversation with Mr. Miller, the manager, who sat on his The other men around the table were Vice-President Brent, Supt. Smith, Leonard Harvey, John Ward and Mathew Whitworth, the last two being the more prominent of the directors. Roy took a seat on one side of the room, waiting until Mr. Miller was disengaged. As he did so Mr. Armstrong turned to address the others at the table. Every one instantly ceased talking, and the room became so quiet that one might have heard a pin drop.

"Gentlemen," he said, "the situation to-night is extremely critical. We are virtually sitting on a powder magazine which needs only a spark to explode. Mr. Miller informs me that a committee from the Union called here this morning and presented an ultimatum to the effect that unless the demands were complied with ten thousand men would be ordered to quit work next Monday morning. That is why you have all been summoned here to-day."

"Let them strike!" interrupted a director; "they'll soon come to their senses when they're starving."

"It's an outrage that we should permit the Union to dictate to us," said another.

"Gentlemen," cried Mr. Brent, "that is just the point. The Union has gone too far. It has abused its power. If we give way in this instance, we shall never again be masters of our own property. It is not a question of granting the trifling concession asked. It is a question of principle."

Cries of "Hear! hear!" came from all sides of the table.

Mr. Armstrong raised his hand to impose silence.

"You are all familiar," he said, "with the situation. Up to two years ago our workmen were paid on a permanent yearly basis, but I then suggested a sliding scale of wages. The men objected to this, preferring the old method. The sliding scale, of course, would necessarily be controlled by the fluctuations of the steel market. It was my desire that wages should correspond with the earnings of the company. The tonnage men presented a fixed scale to us. We refused and a strike followed. We then took steps to protect our property, and fifty special officers were put in charge of the plant. They came here, but were driven back by the strikers. Finally, peace was patched up, the men accepted the principle of the sliding scale, at the minimum price of \$25 per ton. That contract was





for two years. Since then the price of steel has gone down to \$20 but the men were still getting paid at the \$25 rate. This was manifestly unfair to the company, so we refused to sign a new contract. Thereupon the Union assumed its present hostile attitude. They claim to have the support of practically every man in our employ and declare that unless we yield they will force us to shut down. Next Monday their ultimatum expires. We have just a week to decide. That, gentlemen, is the situation. Now what are we going to do about it?"

"Do?" angrily shouted Mr. Brent. "There's only one thing to do—kick out the malcontents and give other men their jobs. The plant must be kept going at all hazards. Discharge the trouble makers and replace instantly every man who fails to report for work. There is only one way to handle men of that class—show them you're not afraid!"

Richard Brent, vice-president of the Excelsior Steel Company, was a hard-featured, arrogant man with a self-satisfied, aggressive manner. He was one of those conscienceless egotists who bring discredit upon the whole capitalist class—men who look upon the working-man as a species of superior animal, born into the world for their special benefit, unwilling to admit that he is a human being with a heart and soul like themselves, swayed by the same emotions, filled with the same desires and aspirations, and ignoring entirely

the fact that after all the working-man is the real producer of the world's wealth. Mr. Armstrong's policy with his men had always been conciliatory, but Brent believed in the mailed fist.

Mr. Miller, who had turned in his seat, now caught sight of Roy for the first time. He gave him a friendly nod and whispered something in Mr. Armstrong's ear, pointing at the same time in Roy's direction. Mr. Armstrong had not yet seen the energetic young superintendent of whom he had heard many favorable reports, and Roy, without actually seeing, could feel that the great ironmaster's eyes were fixed upon him, taking him in from head to foot. The close scrutiny made him nervous and ill at ease. He wondered why they had sent for him since they did not appear to need him, and he was weighing the chances of being able to slip out unobserved when suddenly Mr. Miller called:

" Marshall!"

Roy rose to his feet, and advanced toward the table covered by a dozen pairs of eyes. Mr. Miller introduced him:

"Gentlemen, this is Roy Marshall, one of our younger superintendents. He has been with the company only a little over a year, but has proved a highly expert and valuable man." Turning to Roy he added: "Marshall, this is Mr. Armstrong—Mr. Brent and



directors of the company. Tell us what you what you know of the feeling in the shops."

Thus invited, Roy told all he knew about the threatened strike. The men, excited by professional agitators, seemed indeed earnest about forcing the Company to renew the old contract and in case of refusal were determined to go out. The leaders, he went on, met in secret session nightly—he did not inculpate Schultz, for after all he was their neighbor—and he had no doubt that the Union's officers were making elaborate preparations for a long struggle. They had told the men they were sure of victory and the men believed it. In his opinion every man would go out and stay out until the Union ordered him back.

"If the men refuse to come back," interrupted Mr. Brent, "we'll bring workmen from other cities to take their places. How do you think they'll relish that, Mr. Superintendent?"

"I think," replied Roy calmly, "that to bring strangers here will be to invite serious trouble. Argue with a man and he'll argue too, and possibly you may succeed in persuading him that he is wrong. Fight him and he'll strike back viciously without reasoning. If our men were to lose their jobs it would go pretty hard with themselves and families, sir. They wouldn't be human if they didn't resent it. After all they're only obeying the orders of their Union. It's the Union that's your enemy, not your workmen. If

there's a long strike, they will be the only victims. I earnestly suggest that every effort be made to convince the men that they are in the wrong before inviting other workmen here or proceeding to extremities of any kind."

A buzz of whispered comments ran round the table. Mr. Armstrong nodded approvingly, as did Superintendent Smith, and one or two others, but it was plain to see that the majority favored stronger measures.

"The superintendent is right, Brent," said Mr. Armstrong; "we don't want to be too hasty with the men. Perhaps we can still compromise in some way or submit the matter to arbitration."

"Impossible!" cried Mr. Brent, bringing his fist down violently on the table. "Rather than do either I'll resign from the Company and I believe the majority of my fellow directors will follow me."

Murmurs of Aye! Aye! came from several of those present. Mr. Brent, his face congested from suppressed anger, continued:

"If we admit the idea of arbitration we might as well throw up our hands and prepare to submit to the tyranny of the Union. I am willing to concede that we are not fighting our men. We are fighting the Union, but since they set our men against us we must defend ourselves. If we are to win, we must keep our mills going."

"That's my view!" chimed in a director.

Every one looked at Mr. Armstrong. As founder and president of the company his views would probably prevail, although it was hardly likely that he would quarrel with Mr. Brent, nor interfere with Mr. Miller, to whom he had always left the management of the men. Some one asked Superintendent Smith what his views were:

"I'm a workman myself," replied the grizzled veteran of a hundred labor wars, "and my sympathies are with the working-men all the time. A strike's a terrible thing. Where compromise is possible it is the best way out, but if there is nothing to compromise what are you going to do? The men are all right. It's the Union that's knocking you. I agree with Mr. Brent and Mr. Miller that you can't afford to show the white feather to the Union."

"That's what I say!" cried another director.

Mr. Armstrong was silent for a moment, then with a shrug of his shoulders, he said:

"Very well, Brent, have it your way. I have always been ready to compromise labor disputes because I believe there are always two sides to a question. I have been in this business fifteen years and have never had a serious quarrel with my workmen. They understand me. I understand them. But I agree with Mr. Brent and Mr. Miller that the present difficulty has not been created by the men so much as by the Union, which abuses its power. I am therefore willing to

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cast my vote in favor of letting you gentlemen go ahead and do what you think proper to protect the interests and property of this Company. The only thing I ask is, don't let the women and children suffer."

A murmur of approval ran all round the table. Mr. Brent was jubilant.

"Now we are free to act," he cried. Then seizing a telegram blank he hurriedly wrote a few words on it, and tossed it across the table to Leonard Harvey. "Here, Harvey, rush this at once to the telegraph office."

Harvey immediately left the room with the despatch and Mr. Brent turned to his colleagues to explain:

"There's only one way to fight workmen—make them feel the hopelessness of resistance. Display weakness and you are lost. Our shops must be kept open, not a fire must go out, not a furnace shut down. We must carry on our business as usual—without violence, if possible; with violence, if necessary. Mr. Miller will immediately secure a number of carpenters and erect a strong stockade all round the works. It should be from ten to twelve feet high and pierced at regular intervals with holes for rifle fire. No striker will be permitted to approach the stockade. If the men go out they will not be allowed to come back and the stockade will keep them out. It will serve also to protect the men we propose to bring from other cities."

"But suppose the strikers reach the stockade and

wreck the shops and machinery," demanded a director.

"I have provided for that," said Mr. Brent calmly.

"If a man approaches the stockade with hostile intent it will be at the risk of his life. I have just telegraphed to the Pinkerton Agency at Philadelphia for three hundred armed deputies. They will defend our property and prevent any one entering. If they are not strong enough we'll make a demand upon the sheriff to call out the entire military force of Pennsylvania."

Murmurs of satisfaction on every hand indicated that the board approved the energetic policy to be pursued.

"Now," continued Mr. Brent, "there is nothing to be done but await developments. Mr. Miller, we appoint you general in command of the Company's defensive forces. You will immediately proceed with the erection of the stockade. When the deputies arrive they will come on barges by way of the river—you will see that they get inside the stockade safely. If the people hear of their coming, they may make trouble, so be prepared. Superintendent Smith will render you all the assistance you need and he will have under him Leonard Harvey and Roy Marshall, and as many more of their men as can be depended upon. That is all. And now, gentlemen, I move that we adjourn."

The meeting broke up and Roy was making his way

to the door when a hand was laid on his shoulder. He turned and saw Mr. Armstrong.

"When this trouble is over," said the ironmaster in a friendly tone, "come to see me. I want to have a little talk with you."

CHAPTER X

ONDAY came and went. The Company declined to pay any attention to the ultimatum, and the next morning the strike was formally declared. Nine thousand five hundred of the total force of ten thousand men employed in the Excelsior Steel Works laid down their tools and walked out. Up to the last minute the officers of the Union had been confident that the Company would weaken. It seemed incredible that it would reject the demands of ten thousand men and paralyze its entire plant without making at least an effort toward a reconciliation. But at a final conference the labor delegates argued in vain. Messrs. Brent and Miller were willing to concede several minor points, but on the question of the wages scale they were immovable as a rock. The delegates said it must be all or nothing. Messrs. Brent and Miller then declared the meeting at an end, and gave notice that every man who deserted his post would be replaced by a non-union workman.

All hope of a peaceful settlement seemed, therefore, at an end. There was every prospect of a long and bitter struggle. The steel plant had shut down com-

pletely, the fires were extinguished, the shops were deserted, a lugubrious silence now reigned where only a few days before was a scene of feverish activity and deafening noise. The only signs of life about the place were the going and coming of a handful of superintendents and watchmen, and half-a-dozen different gangs of carpenters who were building with surprising rapidity a formidable-looking fence. This fence, or stockade, was constructed of stout pine planks, of double thickness, and put up in such a manner as to encircle completely the company's premises. It was about twelve feet high and strongly barricaded on the inner side. Little short of cannon could demolish it. On the top ran rows of barbed wire, making scaling impossible, while every twenty feet or so had been pierced holes, through which the defenders could repel a rush, either by rifle-fire or streams of cold or hot water.

But so far there were no signs of trouble. The majority of the workmen were disposed to be orderly. By order of the mayor the saloons were closed, and the strike leaders urged the men to be calm. Then came the rumor that the Company was determined to start up again with non-union men. The sight of the stockade in course of erection had already angered the men; the fear that they might lose their jobs permanently rendered them furious.

At Glendale the news of the strike had been received



with different emotions. In the Schultz cottage there was unbridled jubilation. The German foreman took all the credit to himself, and as one of the strike leaders was now a person of distinction. He was seen and heard everywhere, and with his loud voice and extravagance of language he had succeeded in impressing many people with his importance.

"Vot I tell you?" was his favorite greeting. "Ve vill show dose pigs of capitalists dat de people is king in America. Not a furnace shall be lighted, not a wheel shall turn vidout our permission!"

In the Marshall home the serious turn events had taken caused both regret and apprehension. was full of sympathy for the poor deluded workingmen dragged into this senseless struggle against their wills. They were merely the victims of self-seeking Their hard-earned savings would go, they agitators. would run into debt, and have to suffer all kinds of privations-for what? If they had a substantial grievance it would be different, then they would be fighting for their daily bread, for their very existence. But Roy was right. The present quarrel was nothing but the doing of firebrands like Schultz, who was an avowed enemy of capital in any form, a radical socialist, almost an anarchist. The Union was clearly in the wrong, every impartial observer admitted that. It had not a champion among the newspapers, and if it met with defeat in this struggle the cause of organized labor would receive a blow from which it might never recover.

Roy had never joined the Union. His rise from the ranks had been so rapid that even the workmen themselves had never identified him as one of them-Instinctively they addressed him as "Sir" when speaking to him, and it aroused no comment when, on the outbreak of hostilities, he was found to be on the Company's side. In fact, the men did not expect any of the superintendents to join them. Superintendents Smith, Harvey, Marshall and a few others who held responsible positions were generally looked upon as Company's men, and no one thought any the worse of them for it. Harvey had at no time been popular, and if a striker had accidentally knocked him on the head no one would have lost much sleep over it, but Roy was a favorite, and it would have gone hard with any one who molested him. He was allowed to come and go past the strikers' pickets as he chose, and he was always greeted with a cheery "Good morning." Sometimes a wag would call out, "What's the Company going to do with Fort Excelsior when they get it finished?" but beyond goodnatured banter of this kind he had nothing to fear from the men.

Yet Eunice lived in a perfect fever of apprehension and anxiety. They had just gone through one tragedy. Another would kill her. Roy was almost

constantly at the works, day and night, for at this crisis the Company needed the services of every man it could rely upon. Even though the fires were out. things had to be looked after in the shops, or else thousands of dollars' worth of valuable machinery would be ruined, and rendered fit only for the scrap Besides, he was one of the defending force, and any moment the strikers might take it in their heads to rush the stockade, and then real fighting would begin. Roy, of course, made light of the situation, and laughed at the idea of his being in any danger, but Eunice, by degrees, learned about the building of the fortified fence, which in itself suggested the expectation of attack, and also about the Pinkerton guards, an injudicious step which she felt sure would infuriate the workmen and excite them to the worst excesses. She was terribly worried, and knew no peace until she saw Roy safely home each evening.

"Please don't go, Roy," she pleaded. "I am dreadfully nervous all the time you are away. I imagine all kinds of dreadful things. I'd rather you gave up the place altogether than run any risk."

"Nonsense, child," he said soothingly. "Would you have your husband show himself a poltroon? There is work to be done, and I must do it. There isn't really the slightest danger. Besides, when this fuss is over promotion will come quicker than ever. The Company will go on growing, and I will grow



with it. Didn't I tell you how Mr. Armstrong told me to call and see him? That can mean only one thing. They are going to better my position. There is no telling where I may land."

The outlook was certainly most hopeful and encouraging as far as their own interests were concerned. Roy was unquestionably making phenomenal progress, and it was only a question of time when he would be one of the biggest men in the steel business. Eunice realized all this, and of course it made her very happy. She knew it was the wife's duty to promote her husband's success in every way possible, and in the hour of anxiety and doubt to show moral force and courage. It was with a smile, therefore, that she let Roy return to his duty at the works, and after his departure she prayed earnestly to the mysterious Power who directs all things to shield from harm the man she loved.

"Promise me," she had said, "you won't incur any unnecessary risk."

"I promise," he had replied, laughingly.

As he went through the dirty, ill-paved streets on his way to the works he noticed on every hand signs of unusual commotion. Something was on foot, and his pulse quickened as instinct told him the crisis had come at last. Up to the present, the behavior of the steel workers had been so quiet and orderly that no stranger would have guessed a strike was in prog-



ress, but now there were unmistakable symptoms of an approaching storm. Groups of men, assembled on street corners, were engaged in heated discussion. Others were shouting and gesticulating. Women and boys ran from every direction, congesting the thoroughfares, contributing to the general confusion and uproar.

"Down with the scabs!" shouted a voice.

The cry was taken up by twenty others.

"Down with the scabs! Down with the Pinkertons!"

"Ah," thought Roy, "that was it—they had learned about the coming of the Pinkerton guards, and the news had goaded them to a frenzy."

The crowd grew thicker and more threatening every moment. Angry mutterings and open threats of violence were to be heard on all sides. There was a faraway rumbling of rough voices and the tramping of many feet, which sounded like a distant roar. The very air seemed heavy with the growing resentment of an outraged people, ready to explode at any time like an electrically charged cloud.

Roy elbowed his way, unrecognized, through the turbulent throngs, and soon found himself safe inside the stockade, the heavy gates of which had been closed. Within, he found watching the crowds, through the port-holes, Mr. Miller, Superintendent Smith, Leonard Harvey and about a dozen watch-

men. Mr. Brent, the fire-eating vice-president, and the real cause of the people's wrath, was, of course, nowhere to be seen.

"Hello, Marshall," cried Mr. Miller, "I'm glad to see you. We feared you wouldn't get through. What did you see outside?"

"Hundreds of men and boys, armed with guns, sticks and stones, are running toward the river. What's the trouble?"

It was as he surmised. News had just come that the Pinkerton guards were being towed up the river on two barges. In fact, they were already sighted. The strikers were infuriated, and were going to try to prevent the landing.

Turning to the little group around him, Mr. Miller said:

"Now, boys, we haven't an instant to lose. We must make a sortie, reach the river bank before the men and strain every effort to get the deputies landed and safe inside the enclosure. Once they are here the Company will be in a position to dictate its own terms."

"I guess not," drawled Superintendent Smith.

"That's smart strategy, maybe, but I'm darned if I can see how a dozen men are going to get the drop on ten thousand."

"Nor I," chimed in Harvey. "It's folly to attempt it. If we show our faces outside the stockade with the mob in that mood I wouldn't give a cent for our lives!"

"'Tain't no kinder use makin' a sorty," added Superintendent Smith, with the authoritative air of a general studying a battlefield. "We'd simply be gobbled up. They'd eat us alive, man, and then what use could we be to the Company? The only practical plan is to remain here on the defensive, repel any attack made on the stockade and despatch a messenger down to the barges with instructions to the Pinkerton fellers to hustle up here as fast as they can."

This suggestion seemed to meet with every one's approval, and even Mr. Miller had enough respect for the veteran's experience to consider his plan an improvement on his own.

"But who will be the messenger?" he objected.

No one volunteered. Roy itched to step forward, but remembered his promise to Eunice, and was silent. Harvey was deeply absorbed in the highly important task of manicuring his nails, and the other men looked sheepishly in other directions, all except Superintendent Smith, who rightly considered himself too old to be included in the eligible class. There was an embarrassing pause, and then Mr. Miller repeated:

"Come, boys, there's no time to be lost. The barges are in sight. Who will volunteer?"

Roy, unable to keep back any longer, stepped forward.

"I'll go, sir."

"Bully for you, Marshall! I'm glad to see some one's got a little grit."

He had not been able to resist. He could not hear a call for a volunteer and stand there, feeling like a coward. What danger was there, anyhow? One man acting alone and lost in such a big crowd was infinitely safer than two dozen men acting together conspicuously.

Mr. Miller gave him his instructions, which were to establish communications with the barges and help the deputies to reach the fort with all possible speed. In order to avoid recognition, he hastily donned a suit of soiled overalls, which he borrowed from one of the shops, and a greasy cap, which he pulled well over his eyes. Thus equipped, he slipped out of the enclosure by a side door, and once more found himself on the street.

No one noticed him. He was merely one of the vast horde of thousands of working men, women and children which, like some turbulent, resistless torrent, poured in a steady stream in the direction of the river, all intent on one fixed purpose—the repulse of the hired mercenaries. At turns in the road the crush was so great and the crowd so dense and boisterous that frequently Roy was carried off his feet. The men, with an expression of grim determination on their faces, and many carrying rifles and revolvers,

shouted and cursed as they marched in measured tread; some of the women, especially those of foreign birth, gesticulated wildly and sang revolutionary songs in shrill strident voices; while the boys and girls, regarding the whole affair as a pleasure jaunt, enjoyed the excitement and filled their pockets and aprons with stones. At one part of the road they overtook a party of men, who were painfully dragging along on wheels taken from a perambulator an oldfashioned cannon, a dilapidated affair which did service on Decoration Day for patriotic salutes, but now to be put to sterner use. The whole scene recalled vividly to Roy's mind pictures he had seen and accounts he had read of the march of the Parisian furies to Versailles during the early days of the French Revolution.

The situation, decidedly, was more serious than suspected. Mr. Brent's policy had raised a tempest, the destructive effects of which none could foretell. With a horde of sullen, swarthy Huns and Slavs worked up to such a pitch of frenzy there was no knowing what might happen.

Suddenly a man appeared, running, coming from the direction in which the mob was headed. He was a prominent strike leader, and the serried ranks of workmen opened to let him pass.

"They're coming! They're coming!" he cried ex-

citedly. "The Pinkertons are here! Quick—to the river! Don't let a single son —— come ashore!"

"We won't! We won't!" roared the crowd. "We'll drown them like rats!"

The rhythmic tramp of labor's army quickened into a double, then became a run, finally ending in a general stampede, men, women and children racing like mad down the incline, vociferating and yelling. Presently, at a turn in the road the river came in view and now Roy saw a strange spectacle.

For more than two miles the river bank was black with people—a vast crowd of twenty thousand human beings, some sitting, others standing, all grimly watching the gradual approach of two black barges which were on the river below in tow of two steamers. But what held Roy's attention more than anything else was the extraordinary attitude of the crowd. A few moments ago it had been in frenzied uproar, the noise had been deafening, but now a sudden and unnatural hush had fallen over the vast assemblage. No order to that effect had been given by the leaders. eral consent every man, woman and child dropped into a deep silence; not a shout was raised, not a voice heard. If any one spoke it was in whispers. It was as if a giant audience in a colossal auditorium were awaiting the final act of a tragedy.

Roy made his way quickly and unostentatiously down to the river bank, pressing his way gradually

toward the point where he had expected the barges would try to effect a landing. He passed several men who worked in his own shop and who knew him as well as they did themselves, but the excitement and confusion was such that no one paid attention to any one else. The crowd was thickest at the dock, the strikers having gathered there in force, while some fifty yards further back on the slope, they were busy planting the cannon, for the evident purpose of sweeping the dock with shot in case the deputies, depending on their military discipline and quick-firing Winchesters, should make a dash and reach the shore.

For the first time Roy now fully realized the seriousness of the situation, and his own helplessness. This was no child's play. The men were determined the Pinkertons should not land, and human life would be sacrificed if they attempted it. Bloodshed seemed inevitable either way. It was not likely that the barges would return without making at least an attempt and that would be the signal for firing on both sides. What could he do—single-handed against a multitude in delirium? He probably would not have a chance to even get near the deputies.

He turned to the river to watch the boats. The tugs had stopped, their pilots hesitating to proceed. It had been anticipated that the landing of the deputies would be opposed, but no one had foreseen a popular demonstration of such magnitude. Yet they could not turn

tail, like so many whipped mongrels, without making at least an effort to execute the orders of their employers. The deputies hung back, not liking the looks of the mob, but their chiefs encouraged them. It was more than likely that the workmen would run like sheep directly they saw the loaded Winchesters. At such times a handful of determined, disciplined men can easily overawe and demoralize a rabble of thousands. So after a brief conference the deputies decided to go on and the boats once more headed toward the shore.

The strikers had followed the manœuvres in sullen silence. It was half expected that the barges would turn back, and an almost imperceptible murmur of disappointment passed through the crowd when they feared that their prey might yet escape their wrath. But when the tugs suddenly gave a quick half turn, and headed full speed for the dock, the voices of the thousands that lined the shore sent up a savage, exultant yell that echoed among the hills miles away.

As the first barge swung close to the dock and made fast, a number of strikers, Schultz prominent among them, rushed forward brandishing sticks and fists.

"Get away from that dock!" they cried. "You can't land here! The first man who attempts to come ashore does it at the peril of his life."

The now thoroughly frightened deputies could be seen huddled inside the barge, peering through port-

holes, arguing with their chiefs, who were trying to give them courage. The pilot of the tug sought to gain time by parleying, but it was of no avail.

"Cut loose from that dock!" shouted the striker again angrily, "or we'll sink yer!"

No one stirred. The barge did not budge. Inside, the Pinkertons were forming in order of fours, each man a Winchester in hand. Roy, seeing that they were about to make a dash for the shore, ran quickly down to the dock to meet them. Suddenly, something buzzed close by his ear.

"Ping!"

At the same instant a pane of glass in the barge fell in splinters and a howl of pain came from a deputy inside.

The battle was on and Roy had narrowly escaped a speeding bullet. No one knew who fired it. The strikers claimed afterwards that it came from the barge. The deputies on the other hand showed as evidence the shattered window. Anyhow it was the shot that started actual hostilities. The deputies instantly opened fire and half a dozen strikers fell, the rest falling back in confusion. Roy, in order to escape the rain of bullets, had fallen flat on his stomach, and from where he was he watched the progress of the fight.

Thinking that the strikers were in full flight, the Pinkertons, one hundred and fifty strong, now emerged triumphantly from the barge, and lined up on the dock, preparing to advance. But the strikers were far from being beaten. When they had recovered from their first surprise and removed their dead and wounded they advanced again, firing as they went, bullets mingling with the shower of stones. Most of the bullets went wild, but some found a mark. First one Pinkerton dropped, then another. The captain of the guards gave a quick command and instantly came a volley. When the smoke cleared a dozen more strikers were stretched out on the ground.

The workmen began to fall back again and victory appeared to rest with the Pinkertons, whose second barge now tied up to the dock, when suddenly there came a terrific roar and concussion that shook the ground. The men had fired the cannon, loaded to its mouth with every missile procurable, and a perfect rain of death had swept the ground near the dock on which the Pinkertons stood. Twenty guards were killed outright and over thirty badly injured. Orders were at once given for a retreat to the barges. Strikers they might tackle, but to face cannon was another matter.

The mob of strikers and sympathizers, which had retired to a prudent distance up the slope on the outbreak of the fighting, yelled with fierce delight. A wild roar of triumph went up from ten thousand throats, now thirsty for human blood.

"Lynch the murderers! Death to the Pinkertons! Vengeance! Vengeance!"

The deputies disappeared inside the barge and kept up a desultory shooting from inside, while the strikers, growing bold with success, rained on the enemy a continuous volley of bullets and stones. Not a deputy dared to show his face and already the barges were badly damaged. The mob now tried to puncture them below the water line so they would sink with their human freight, and with this object in view the cannon was once more loaded to the muzzle and fired. The aim was excellent, the shot shattering a large part of the superstructure and setting it on fire. Shrieks of joy arose from the mob, as they hastened to reload. The second shot was still more accurate, entering the barge some inches below the water.

The deputies now began to realize the peril of their position and very soon a white flag appeared above the smoking ruins of the superstructure.

Firing ceased and Schultz and a number of other strikers advanced to parley.

- "Do you surrender?" shouted Schultz.
- "Yes," came the reply from the Pinkerton captain.
- "Come out then."
- "Only on condition," answered the captain, "that our men retain their arms and be allowed to take train back to Philadelphia."
 - "Not on your life!" shouted Schultz. "You'll lay

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down your arms and submit to arrest on charge of murder. If you don't surrender at once we'll open fire again and blow you to hell!"

The Pinkerton disappeared and some minutes were passed in conference. Then he reappeared.

"All right!" he said. "Unconditional surrender!"

The Pinkertons began to swarm out of the burning barge like rats from a sinking ship, and the whole hillside of strikers and their friends rushed down to greet them.

"No violence to the prisoners!" shouted Schultz.

"The men have surrendered and will answer to the law!"

Fifty stalwart steel workers, under the command of Schultz, constituted themselves a special escort for the discomfited Pinkertons who were to be handed over to the police. They looked a sorry lot, their uniforms torn and many with their faces bleeding. They thought their troubles were ended with their arrest, but they were soon undeceived. It was no easy matter to control a mob once its passions had been aroused and the strikers were bent on inflicting punishment on the defenceless guards, law or no law. In spite of the efforts which their escort made to protect them on the journey from the river to the city. the crowd constantly broke through the line, striking at them savagely with clubs and hurling stones in their faces. One unfortunate had his jaw smashed in this

manner, another had an arm broken and all were more dead than alive when they finally reached their destination.

Long before this Roy had seen enough. Directly he caught sight of the white flag he knew it was useless for him to remain there. It was more important that he should hurry back to the works and report what had happened. Rapidly he made his way back to the stockade, where he found Mr. Miller and all the others in a state of the utmost suspense and anxiety. They had heard the firing and feared precisely what had happened. The question now was, would the mob, flushed with its victory, proceed to make a hostile demonstration against the stockade? Roy thought The strikers had accomplished what they had set out to do and it was likely that they would be satisfied with that. But while the men were in their present mood, it would be suicidal to think of starting up the plant with non-union men, for the new-comers would assuredly meet with the same fate as the Pinkertons.

Then followed some lively telegraphing. Mr. Miller informed Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Brent of the serious situation that had arisen, and he called upon the sheriff of the county for police protection. If police were not strong enough to save the works, they would make a demand upon the Governor for the militia.

But there were no indications of immediate danger.

The storm was followed by a calm which led many to think that the men repented of their hasty action and were ready to return to work. This, however, was not the case. The strikers had spent their fury against the Pinkertons, but otherwise they were peaceably disposed. They had gone out on strike for a principle and they were determined to stay out until the Company gave way on the wage scale question. battle on the river front had alarmed Mr. Brent and the other directors to the verge of panic. To keep the plant shut down meant financial ruin, yet if, on the other hand, they attempted to run the works with nonunion men it might be followed by the worst kind of mob violence. Nothing, therefore, could be done unless with the support of the overwhelming military force, so frantic efforts were at once made to induce the Governor to order out the militia. The executive was loath to do as requested, but enormous commercial interests were at stake and powerful influence was brought to bear. So vielding finally to public clamor, the military machinery of the State of Pennsylvania was set in motion. Regiment after regiment was sent to Pittsburg until the region assumed the appearance of a fortified camp.

It was only when Eunice saw the soldiers that she breathed freely. On the day of the fight she had seen nothing of Roy since early morning. She heard the shouting and shooting and imagined the worst. As

the day wore on and no news came her anxiety was pitiful, and when, a little later, Mrs. Schultz burst in with the news that the strikers had shot and killed several of the Company's men, she nearly swooned in her arms. But night came and with it Roy, looking none the worse for his adventure, and Eunice was once more the happiest woman in Glendale.

For the next three months matters hung fire, the soldiers weary of patrol duty, the strikers still firm in their demands, the Company slowly but surely gaining ground. Under the protection of the military a large force of non-union workmen were brought in from other cities and although these new-comers were hooted as "scabs" and greeted with derisive ieers no one ventured to interfere with them. Every one predicted that this was the beginning of the end. Excelsior furnaces, so long silent, started up, one after the other, and soon the place took on some of its former bustle and activity. The strike leaders, while urging the men to stand firm, dropped out one by one. Schultz accepted a lucrative city job and other firebrands of his stamp also conveniently disappeared from view. Then the inevitable happened. they were deserted by their old leaders, the rank and file became demoralized, and there ensued a stampede to the Company's offices to secure such jobs as were still to be had. The great strike was ended and the power of the Steel Workers' Union broken forever.

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One day, about a week after the resumed operations, racing feverishly day and night to catch up with long-delayed orders, a short gray-headed man passed through the armor plate shop on a tour of inspection. Catching sight of Roy, who was intent on a piece of work, he at once hailed him:

"Hello, Marshall—why haven't you been to see me?"

Roy looked up and when he saw Mr. Armstrong he nearly fell over from sheer surprise, while the other workmen whispered and nudged each other, pointing to the great ironmaster. Roy stammered excuses.

"We've been so busy since the strike, sir. There's a lot to be done and I——"

"That's all right," interrupted the big man, "keep it up, but don't work too hard. Take a day off to-morrow and come to see me. We'll have a little talk."





PART III NIGHT

"Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."—BURNS.

CHAPTER I

WISH to see Mr. Marshall."

"Mr. Marshall?" echoed the haughty cierk
in a tone of injured astonishment at the audacity of such a request. "Have you an appointment
with Mr. Marshall?"

"No, I haven't," admitted the caller, a little man, shabbily dressed, with white hair and a face furrowed by as many wrinkles as he was years old.

The clerk evidently did not approve of his appearance, for, resuming his task of making entries in a huge ledger, he dismissed his interlocutor summarily by saying:

"The vice-president sees no one except by appointment, made by letter. You are wasting your time. Good morning!"

But the shabby little man did not budge.

"I guess," he said laconically, "I'll trouble you to go and find out if Mr. Roy Marshall will see me. I'd hate to have to tell him that one of his \$15-a-week clerks didn't know enough to be civil to an old pal of his. I reckon your job wouldn't be worth thirty cents."

The clerk looked up again sharply and a troubled,

anxious look came into his commonplace face. More politely he said:

"Your card, sir?"

"Oh, cut out the card. Just say that Joe Blake, formerly of the New York Scorpion, is out here."

The clerk went into an inner room and almost instantly reappeared, followed by Roy, who rushed impulsively forward to greet his old newspaper chum.

"Well, well, by all that's wonderful! Blake, old chap, where on earth did you come from?"

"Oh, it's a long story," replied the other with a weary smile. He began to cough, a hollow, racking cough that bent still more his attenuated frame, and his threadbare coat and frayed linen stood out in striking contrast with the healthy, faultlessly tailored figure of his former comrade.

"Well, come in and let's hear it," said Roy heartily, taking Blake by the arm and leading him into his private office, to the stupefaction of the inquisitive clerks, who wondered what their aristocratic and well-groomed chief could have in common with such a shabby-looking stranger.

Meantime, the two men were seated facing each other in the private sanctorum of the vice-president of the Empire Steel Company—the man who had lost and the man who had won in the battle of life.

Ten years had passed since the great strike and in this interval the steel situation had undergone sweeping changes. The labor troubles were followed by an era of extraordinary prosperity for the Excelsior plant. Instead of the Armstrong interests having been injured, the affairs of the famous ironmaster acquired a new and irresistible impetus. The world needed more and more steel, and thanks to the energy and sagacity of its directing genius the Excelsior plant continued to secure the cream of the domestic and foreign trade. Its capacity for manufacturing steel gradually grew to be one of the marvels of the industrial world, the plant constantly increasing its output, daily breaking its own record and astounding its delighted directors by the immense fortunes that it literally poured into their laps. During those three dark months when the defiant Union had paralyzed the Excelsior furnaces, the rival steel makers had strained every nerve to profit by Armstrong's embarrassed position, and they did not scruple to attempt to divert some of the immense amount of business which previously had all been going his way. This act of treachery toward a crippled competitor Armstrong never forgave, and when, having defeated the strikers, he resumed operations, he at once declared merciless war on the steel men. He harassed them in every possible way, laying down railroads here, underselling them there, buying coal land, building coke ovens, until his competitors cried for quarter. But Armstrong would give none, so, in order to save their own skins, the steel makers got together and decided that there was only one thing to do—buy Armstrong out and amalgamate all the leading steel plants in one huge concern.

The steel trust was born from that minute. biggest financiers were behind the scheme and negotiations opened with the steel king. They offered him \$200,000,000 and he laughed at the envoys, declaring he would not sell for less than \$500,000,000. magnitude of the amount staggered the steel men, but there was no way out of it, and the gigantic deal was put through. The name of the company was changed to the Empire Steel Company and John Armstrong was elected president. He had the privilege of retaining what men he chose, and he selected those whom he himself acknowledged had contributed to his stupendous success-Jake Smith, Leonard Harvey and Roy Marshall. Mr. Miller and Mr. Brent retired with ample fortunes when reorganization came. Leonard Harvey had taken Mr. Miller's place as general manager at the works and Roy Marshall at Mr. Armstrong's special request had accepted the position of vice-president.

To-day the Empire Steel Company was a colossus among the vast industrial organizations of the world and John Armstrong was practically supreme ruler over an empire of steel—an empire as large as three States, having a standing army of two hundred thousand workmen, a dozen railroads, twenty ports, a formidable fleet of a hundred vessels and treasure estimated at not less than two billions of dollars!

No one had watched the incoming golden tide of millions with greater fascination than Roy Marshall. Years before, Mr. Armstrong had made him a junior partner and when the amalgamation came he found to his amazement that his stock represented millions. Great wealth had come to him so suddenly, practically overnight, that his brain reeled. When Mr. Armstrong had calmly informed him that his holdings were worth twenty million dollars and congratulated him, he had staggered home like a drunken man, to the great alarm of Eunice, who thought he was ill.

Twenty millions! Success—wealth—beyond his wildest expectations, had come at last! There was nothing the world had to offer that, henceforth, he could not buy, and the sensation of possessing almost unlimited purchasing power was so novel that for days he went about like a man demented. Then, as he slowly realized that it was not a dream, he took his good fortune more philosophically. He had worked like a galley slave for ten long years; henceforward he would take it easier and enjoy life. He and Eunice were still young. Wealth, which had been the only thing missing in their happy married life, was now theirs.

Long ago they had left the humble little cottage at

Glendale, associated with timorous beginnings and heart-rending tragedy, and for some time had occupied a handsome villa in the more fashionable suburb of Oakland, but when he found himself a millionaire. Roy at once decided that he must live in a style less The Oakland villa was all very well for a man making his ten or fifteen thousand a year, but it would never do for a multimillionaire. So he built on Highland Avenue a residence which, when completed, became one of the show places of Pittsburg. It was of pure white marble, in Renaissance style of architecture, and occupied a space equal to two city blocks. On all sides it was surrounded by gardens elaborately laid out and enclosed by fine ornamental They called it Altonia in remembrance of Alton Court. The interior was as beautiful as the Magnificent halls, noble reception rooms, exterior. monumental stairways, decorated by the leading artists of Europe, and the furnishings by New York and Paris upholsterers, were on the same scale of reckless extravagance. By the time all was finished the house and grounds represented an outlay of two million dollars.

Roy did not care what it cost. His money had come so easily and in such huge bulk that he felt he could afford to spend with a prodigal hand. This sudden transition from comparative poverty to enormous wealth had an effect on him akin to that produced by

a couple of glasses of champagne on a person unaccustomed to strong liquors. He felt exhilarated, elated, buoyant, jubilant. The whole world appeared in different colors, the very passers by in the streets did not seem the same. Whereas, formerly, they hurried past paying no heed to him, now they stopped and stared, pointing him out as the lucky steel maker, going out of their way to attract his attention and curry his favor. Yesterday he was nobody; to-day he was a personage of vast social importance, and when he began to notice the difference in people's demeanor, and how suddenly friends sprang up on all sides, he commenced to realize the power of money. He soon found that gold will purchase not only the necessaries and superfluities of life but human beings as well. enslaving men and degrading women. Roy would have been hardly human if his head had not been turned.

When money comes late in life to a man whose tastes and character are already formed, there is less danger of his rushing headlong into those follies which have wrecked many young men inheriting great fortunes on attaining their majority. Roy was now forty, well past the dangerous age when men are liable to stumble into all kinds of moral pitfalls. The man of forty, as a rule, is as different from the man of twenty-five or thirty as it is possible for two men to be. He takes a saner, broader view of life, he acts

more rationally, he is led by reason rather than by impulse. That is why it happens that a man who sows his wild oats in his youth generally becomes a staid married man by the time he is forty. On the other hand, the man who was a model of propriety in his youth is apt to develop a taste for wild-oat sowing later in life and then the crop he garners is likely to be disastrous.

Roy had never shown any inclination for a gay life or dissipation of any kind. He had studiously avoided Leonard Harvey and his fast set of companions, firstly because he had no tastes for their amusements, secondly because they would take him away from home and from his work, which up to then had been all-important. But when he found himself practically independent and possessed of an enormous fortune, he became seized with an unconquerable impulse to abandon his hermit-like mode of living and see more of the world, which, to a great extent, must always remain a closed book to either the poor or busy man. Now he was rich, immensely rich, he could have fine houses in Pittsburg and New York, he could entertain lavishly, have an unlimited number of servants, carriages and automobiles, buy anything he fancied and travel through those countries he knew only by name. In a word, at last he could live!

But although he now had it in his power to do all these things, Roy did not for an instant neglect his

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work. On the contrary, his success only spurred him on to renewed effort. Mr. Armstrong, who had the greatest opinion of his executive ability, left practically everything to him and under his management the Empire Steel Company became the biggest, wealthiest and most powerful concern in the world. The larger grew the profits, the harder Roy toiled. Nothing was too big or too difficult for him to undertake. The business of rolling up more and more millions to the Company's credit became the all-absorbing passion of his life. Still as popular with the workmen as when one of themselves, he was also well liked by the men of his own class, and it was the general opinion that no one had ever presided with greater success at the monthly directors' meeting. Yet, although courteous and approachable with all, in business transactions he was quick as a flash to see when the Company was offered the worst end of a bargain, and then the interviewer at once found himself in the presence of a master.

In personal appearance Roy had not changed much in the sixteen years that had slipped by since he left Boston to fight his own way in the world. His hair was gray at the temples and thinner at the top and his face was graver and stronger in its lines. But otherwise it was the same Roy Marshall who had winced when he rang the dead man's bell that blustery night in Brooklyn.

Joe Blake was of the same opinion as he glanced furtively at his one-time fellow reporter. From Roy's face his gaze wandered to his fine clothes and then round the room, taking in the rich fittings of his luxurious office.

"Things are different than in the Vulture days," he said with a grin.

"Yes," said Roy carelessly, "I've made a success of it. It feels nice when it comes. And you?" he asked.

The old reporter was taken with another distressing coughing spell. When it ceased he answered:

"You see what I am. I guess I shan't last much longer. I'll be glad when it's over."

"Don't talk that way, man," said Roy sympathetically. "When did you leave the Scorpion?"

"A year ago. I caught cold while on an assignment for the paper and it settled on my lungs. I soon became too weak to work and they gave me a week's salary and told me I could go—after being with them nearly twenty years! Just think of it! Didn't I tell you how it was? You were lucky you got out."

Again a spasm of coughing interrupted him.

"And then?"

"I couldn't find anything to do and I soon got into debt. Finally I secured a job as proofreader but my eyes gave out and I had to resign. Then I addressed envelopes for a few cents a thousand, but it was

dreadful drudgery and barely kept body and soul together. One day I saw your name in a newspaper. They called you the Napoleon of Steel and said you were heaping up millions daily. I thought you might remember an old newspaper chum and perhaps be able to find something here for me to do—as clerk, watchman, anything. I guess it won't be for long. I spent my last dollar on a railroad ticket to Pittsburg and here I am."

Roy's first impulse was to spring from his seat and, grasping the hand of the human derelict stranded before him, to cry: You've come to the right place, Blake, old man. I will find something for you. Every victim of that wretched newspaper life has my heartfelt sympathy. I don't suppose there will be much in what position I can make for you, but it will be enough to keep you in comfort for the rest of your days. And to-night you will be my guest at dinner at Altonia.

This is how he would have spoken a few years ago and it was on the tip of his tongue to say it now, but he suddenly checked himself as he remembered that Leonard Harvey was coming to dinner that evening. Harvey would think it strange to see a shabbily dressed stranger sitting at the luxuriously appointed table at Altonia. He (Roy) was sorry for Blake, of course, and would give him employment about the works of some kind, but he could not be expected to entertain

him at his house. It was all very well to feel sympathy and all that kind of thing but wealth and position had their duties which could not be ignored. He could not afford to violate the conventions. Thus had the iron already entered his soul!

Pulling a roll of bills from his pocket, he tore off a ten dollar note and handed it to Blake, and with more reserve than he had at first displayed, he said:

"I'll see what I can do for you. Suppose you come and see me the day after to-morrow. I'm busy now or I would have you stay."

The ex-reporter rose. He understood that he was dismissed. For a moment he was surprised at Roy's abruptness, seeing that he had greeted him with such unaffected cordiality, but after all, it was the way of the world. Those who manage to climb to the top have little use for the unfortunates still struggling at the bottom.

When he had gone, closing the door behind him, Roy was seized with remorse. He felt he had behaved like a brute. Yet what could he do? As vice-president of the Company, he could not be on terms too intimate with a man who was to be employed in a very subordinate capacity. It would be harmful to discipline. He could not be expected to open his house to every one he had ever met in his life just because they were unfortunate and destitute and he was successful and rich. The very idea was ridiculous. At

the same time he thought he would not mention the incident to Eunice. She had queer ideas on such matters and there was no telling what she might think or say. No, decidedly, he would say nothing about it to Eunice.

He was thus cogitating when there came a rap at the door and Harvey put his head in.

- "Busy?" he asked with a smile.
- "No, come in, Lenny," said Roy. "I'm glad to see you. I just need your exuberant spirits to cheer me up. A poor devil was in here just now and his tale of woe has made me blue. Don't forget," he added, "that you dine with us at the house to-night."
- "How could any one forget Altonia and its charming hostess?" said Harvey with the bow of a courtier.

 "I'll be with you without fail, but I came principally to see you about that trip to New York."

As with Roy, the years had passed lightly over Leonard Harvey's head. His black wavy hair only slightly streaked with gray, his dark eyes flashing with the same fire, he was as handsome as ever. He, too, had benefited when the division of profits came, and was several times a millionaire. He had never married, having, like the proverbial sailor, a wife in every port, and with luxurious bachelor apartments in Pittsburg and New York he played the rôle of Don Juan in both cities with signal success.

Since their accession to wealth, the two men had

seen much more of each other. Roy had always been strongly attached to his brilliant colleague, and when his money came, bewildering him, he had naturally turned for advice to Harvey, who had wider experience in mundane matters. He it was who suggested the building of Altonia and superintended the decorating and furnishing. He put Roy up at his New York and Pittsburg clubs and introduced him and his wife to society. In a word, he became the official friend and family councillor.

For some time past he and Roy had been in the habit of making periodical little trips to New York. It interested Roy to revisit the familiar scenes under conditions so vastly different from the old povertypinched days, and as Harvey proved a fascinating companion and an expert cicerone, these visits had afforded him considerable pleasure. Besides, as Harvey had pointed out, his present position demanded that he see more of the world and know more of what was going on. No man of wealth and any breadth of mind could tolerate being shut up all his life in Pittsburg. So he had gone willingly enough to be initiated into all that gay Gotham has to offer the rich man. Harvey knew every one in New York of importance and few men about town were as familiar as he with those resorts in the metropolis where pleasure, or what passes for pleasure, can be bought for gold. He was as much at home flirting with the fashionable mondaines of Fifth Avenue as he was carousing with cocottes of the Tenderloin. He was a familiar figure on every race track where he had horses running in his name, and his visiting card secured instant admission to the biggest and most carefully guarded gambling houses in New York, places where it was nothing to risk \$10,000 on the turn of a card, and a mere bagatelle to lose or make a fortune of \$200,000 in a single evening. Such was the man who was carefully giving Roy Marshall the education which, he insisted, every self-respecting multimillionaire must have.

Another of these visits to Manhattan was now to be made in connection with a stag dinner which Harvey proposed giving on his birthday three weeks hence. Invitations to it were eagerly sought by all the young bloods in Pittsburg, for, according to report, it was to be a most elaborate affair, with sensational features that would eclipse anything of the kind Manhattan had ever seen.

"I've just heard from Martinetti's," said Harvey.
"I can get the tapestry room. It holds forty men very comfortably. The rest I'll take care of. We'll have lots of fun. You're coming of course?"

Roy was silent for a moment, toying nervously with the papers scattered over his desk. Then he said:

"Yes, I'll be there." Then, quickly, he added: "Be careful to say nothing about it before Eunice."

"Of course not," said Harvey.

"Oh, by the way," he added. "I forgot to tell you. I met a friend of yours in New York the other day."

"Who's that?"

"Cleo Gordon. She looked simply stunning, like one of her own portraits cut bodily from the frame. She was stepping out of her electric brougham in front of Tiffany's, and you should have seen how everybody stared. She had 'em all on-dressed to kill-and people weren't sure whether she was a Russian princess or a swell member of the half world. No one to look at her would imagine she was an artist, yet she has enormous ability. Her last picture won a medal at the Exhibition. But to me she appeals more as the woman than as the artist. Her splendid coloring, that Titian-red hair, the pallor of her oval-shaped face, with its delicate features, her blue eyes, her long eyelashes which throw a shadow on her cheek, her finely arched eyebrows-no wonder the men are crazy about her! If you'd caught a glimpse of her little feet, with their open-work stockings and dainty slippers, as she tripped across the pavement, you'd have succumbed on the spot."

"I didn't imagine you had so much enthusiasm left, Lenny," said Roy dryly.

"You can't blame me, can you? Isn't a smile from Cleo Gordon enough to set any man on fire?"

"She's certainly a fascinating creature," assented Roy.

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"We had quite a little chat," went on Harvey.

"She inquired after you and asked me to bring you to the house again. She said you were such an interesting man!" added Harvey with a mocking laugh.

Roy laughed too, but his gayety was somewhat Neither the message nor the invitation made forced. him feel exactly comfortable. On one of his recent visits to the city Harvey had suggested a call on the fashionable portraitist who gave Sunday evening musicales in her luxuriously appointed studio on Central Park West. One met there all the celebrities of artistic New York-musicians, sculptors, novelists, poets, journalists, singers, actors-and to Roy it was a world so entirely new, a circle so radically different from prosaic, strenuous steel making, that it appealed to him with compelling force. they talked art, music, literature, drama, instead of ore, ingots, castings and profits. It was an elysium of human thought and ideals as contrasted with an inferno of human industry. It was an evening full of sensuous charm and intellectual delight, and the steel maker was completely fascinated. He was introduced to authors whose books he had read, he met painters whose canvases decorated the walls of Altonia, he chatted with actors who, on the stage, had thrilled or amused him.

"What shall I tell her if I meet her again?" demanded Harvey.

"Oh, anything," laughed Roy. "Tell her she is too dangerous a hostess for a married man." Then rising and closing his desk with a bang, he added: "Well, Lenny, I must be off home. Eunice will be wondering where I am. We'll expect you to dinner at seven."

CHAPTER II

REALLY, my dear Eunice, there are times when I cannot understand you. What more can you possibly wish for? You have an enormous fortune, a palace to live in, a sweet little daughter and a successful husband. There is not a woman in Pittsburg who does not envy you."

Mrs. Marshall and her friend Mrs. Dexter were seated in the grounds of Altonia on a rustic bench near an ornamental fountain whose dancing waters, kissed by the rays of the fast-setting sun, reflected a dozen changing colors. It was late in autumn and the trees and shrubs rained thousands of leaves on the elaborately laid-out lawns at every breath of the wind. As the shadows deepened, the broad gravel walks, the greenhouses and ferneries, the groups of marble statuary, rising here and there amid parterres of rhododendrons, all took on vague golden tones, while the air was heavy with the perfume of flowers. From the house, whose stately white outlines could be seen through the trees, came the sound of a piano and the unrestrained laughter of a child.

Mrs. Philip Dexter was the wife of a millionaire coal baron and an acknowledged leader of Pittsburg's

Four Hundred. The Marshalls had been introduced to her at a charity bazaar, and with an eye to their lucky windfall, which was then the talk of the town, she promptly invited the steel maker and his wife to dinner as a preliminary to presenting them formally to society. She was still a young woman, being barely out of the thirties, and as she was good-natured and always amusing, Eunice had been glad to make a companion of her. Otherwise, their tastes could hardly be more dissimilar. Gossip and tittle-tattle, which Eunice detested, was the salt of life to her, and she was a devotee of bridge, in which Eunice took not the slightest interest. For Mrs. Dexter, society, its doings, its dress, its gossip, its scandals, were far more important than eating or sleeping. People who did not move in society simply did not exist for her.

Eunice nervously pulled to pieces a rose which she had plucked from a nearby shrub, and the delicate pink petals fell about her in a shower as she answered:

"What leads you to think that I wish for anything that is not mine already? Have I uttered a complaint?"

"Your manner—that's all," replied Mrs. Dexter.

"You don't care for the things a rich woman should care for. Society bores you, you have no taste for bridge, and while you dress well, you only do it because you can't help yourself. If our rich women were all like you, the dressmakers would go to the

poorhouse. You don't even flirt; Mr. Harvey is always ogling you, and you plainly show him he is wasting his time. What is wealth for if not to spend on finery and pleasure? You don't give one the impression of being a contented woman. Mr. Harvey himself has remarked it. He says you have entirely changed since the days when your husband was struggling to make both ends meet. One would think your money had brought you unhappiness. It is usually the reverse."

"You forget," said Eunice gravely, "that I have had a great sorrow. Besides, the years are getting on and I am not growing younger."

"You mean the death of your little boy. That was a blow, of course, but it was years ago. Now you have a little girl, which is Nature's compensation. As to growing old, you're not yet thirty-five. Balzac says in one of his books that a woman doesn't reach her prime until she's forty. It's the cleverest thing he ever said. It's real comfort to me. I shall be forty next May. Just think of it! Isn't it positively dreadful?"

The chatterbox rose to go. There were other calls to make, and it was getting near dinner time. She frequently ran in on Eunice in this informal way, usually with the not altogether disinterested object of getting the wealthy mistress of Altonia to contribute a check to some more or less deserving charity, and

her mission never failed. Mrs. Dexter knew by experience that no matter what little interest her hostess took in society's frivolity, no matter what scant patience she had in discussions of bridge and the latest styles. she would always lend a willing ear to any story of distress, and her purse was ever open to the unfortunate. She had plenty of money to spend as she liked. On her first birthday after they moved to Altonia, she found on her plate at breakfast a check for \$500,-000, a present from Roy. The income of this sum, which she intended to settle on her child, more than sufficed for pin money and a large portion of it went for philanthropic purposes. For her numerous charities, Eunice had a special bank account upon which she drew checks especially engraved, each bearing the portrait of her own Teddy, from a photograph taken the first year at Glendale. In this way, she delighted to give, feeling that each of her bounties was made in the name of her dead baby whom she had never ceased to mourn.

- "I really must be going," said Mrs. Dexter, glancing at her watch. "It's six o'clock. Mr. Marshall will be here any minute."
- "My husband won't be home until seven," said Eunice.
- "No?" ejaculated Mrs. Dexter, raising her eyebrows interrogatively.

- "He's been to New York," explained Eunice. "I expect him back on the 6.50 train."
- "Mr. Marshall's in New York a good deal, isn't he?" asked Mrs. Dexter pointedly.
- "Yes, very frequently," replied Eunice with perfect composure.
- "I suppose business calls him there?" persisted Mrs. Dexter, in the hope that the wife would take her into her confidence.
 - "I suppose so," replied Eunice dryly.
 - "It must be very lonely for you," added the other.
- "It is," said Eunice in an abrupt, frigid tone which completely baffled the inquisitive cross-examiner and made further questioning impossible.
- "Oh, by the way, dear," exclaimed Mrs. Dexter as she shook hands with her hostess. "What did you decide about the decorations of your boudoir?"
- "Nothing as yet," answered Eunice. "The upholsterer promised to bring me some papers to select from. I want something dainty and cheerful."
- "Don't decide on anything till next week when I get back from New York," said Mrs. Dexter. "I know Cleo Gordon, the portrait painter. She's all the rage now and has a magnificent studio on Central Park West. They say her boudoir is simply the loveliest room you ever saw. I'll run in there while I'm in town, and see it myself. You may be able to get an idea for your own boudoir. Good-by, dear!"

Long after she had gone Eunice sat on the rustic bench, quiet, almost motionless, lost in thought. The sun sank below the western horizon, setting the sky aflame with his fiery glory, and the shadows of the east deepened as she still sat there waiting for her husband, watching through the trees the windows of the house which lit up one by one.

Was it true that riches had brought her unhappiness? Mrs. Dexter said that she was the most envied woman in Pittsburg. But how could the outside world guess that her heart was breaking?

At thirty-five Eunice looked little different from what she had at twenty-five. Ten years had left slight trace of their passage. Her figure was plumper and the serious lines in her face had deepened somewhat, but otherwise she was the same sweet, refined woman whom Rov Marshall had won for his bride in Boston fifteen years before. The avalanche of gold which made her husband a multimillionaire had not changed her in the slightest degree. She took her new honors as easily and gracefully as if she had been born to them, and even such potent corrupting influences as money and social success were powerless to spoil her sterling nature. She remained the unaffected, sincere woman she always was, with a kind word for every one. no matter what their station in life. She entertained Roy's friends at splendid dinners given at Altonia, on which occasions she wore robes and jewels a duchess might well envy, yet the following morning one was apt to meet her attired in a simple gown paying visits of comfort and charity to her old friends in the cottages at Glendale, distributing bundles of provisions here, money there, toys to the children everywhere. They called her Lady Bountiful and a blessing followed her wherever she went.

Another child had been born to her, a beautiful flaxen-haired girl now eight years old, and to some extent the coming of the daughter had helped Eunice to forget the never entirely healed wound caused by Teddy's death. In the Glendale days she had welcomed the little stranger on this account, and now there was another reason why she thanked God for thus blessing her. She realized more every day that the daughter was taking in her life the place of a companion who was rapidly drifting away from her. poured out upon her child all the affection of which her tender nature was capable, performing lovingly and jealously all those duties most mothers leave to nurses, finding in her little girl's constant companionship some consolation for Roy's growing indifference and neglect. They named the child Grace after Roy's sister, who by this time had children of her own, having married a Boston professor three years previous. They often corresponded and once a year Grace came to pay Eunice and her brother a visit. Both Mr. and Mrs. Marshall had died, one soon after the other, and the younger brother, Edward, was now the head of Marshall & Company. Miss Merrick was still in the marriage market, and there were no bidders.

The difference in their position naturally took Eunice into an entirely new world, a world she had never known and would willingly have avoided, the world called Society—a small, narrow coterie of selfish men and women, recruited from the idle rich class and for the most part morally corrupt to the core, having but one God-Mammon; having but one ideal-to outdo their neighbor in show; devoid of a single decent impulse, incapable of a day's honest work, living on the fat of the land, taking no interest in anything not immediately connected with animal enjoyment or vulgar ostentation, squandering recklessly fortunes laboriously acquired by others, frequently amassed by sharp practice, arousing public indignation and contempt by foolish extravagance and preposterous, degenerate amusements.

Eunice herself had little patience with all this folly. She gave lavish entertainments at Altonia, not because she was fond of it but for reasons of policy. She understood that it was necessary for a man in her husband's position, and for some time she had noticed that Roy cared more for that kind of life than he used to. So she had dutifully done everything in her power to please him, making acquaintances right and left among Pittsburg's smart set, giving dinners and gar-

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den parties, neglecting none of the social duties incumbent upon her position as a rich man's wife.

Roy spent his money liberally and they lived in princely style. There was everything at Altonia which money could purchase—exquisite works of art, costly tapestries, paintings which had cost literally more than their weight in gold. Eunice had her own turnout and Roy his fast automobile. An establishment of this kind naturally called for many servants, and they had a small army of them. Roy had a valet and Eunice her maid and there was a fraulein for Grace.

Eunice cared little for fashion, but she felt that Roy expected her to be as well dressed as the other women of their set, so to gratify him she had placed herself unreservedly in the hands of the most exclusive of New York's modistes and in spite of herself she soon became one of the best-dressed women in Pittsburg. It was a social victory on which she herself did not lay any value, but she was well rewarded when she saw that Roy noted the change in her appearance and seemed pleased. A few days after Mr. Armstrong had told him of his good fortune, Roy had brought her a \$20,000 diamond necklace. This was followed by gifts of other costly gems, until the Marshall diamonds came to be a stereotyped phrase in all the society journals.

Yet with all her millions, despite the almost regal magnificence and luxury which were now part of her life, Eunice would willingly have surrendered all if she and Roy could only be once more as they were in the old Glendale days. The first few months after their fortune came, the change in his financial condition seemed to have no marked effect on Rov. For nearly a year he remained as he always had been-simple in his tastes, full of enthusiasm for his work, devoted to his wife and little girl. Yet strangely enough he had never seemed to take to the second child as much as he had to poor Teddy. Was it because he was afraid to love her, afraid lest they might lose her as they had their first-born? Eunice did not know, only it made her very unhappy, for his indifference seemed to disturb the harmony of their family circle. Then, by degrees, their home life changed entirely. Roy was nearly always absent, dining in town at the club or visiting in New York, usually in company of Leonard Harvey, who had become an intimate of their household.

Eunice had never overcome her first instinctive dislike of this man, but for her husband's sake she forced herself to appear amiable to him. It was he who had suggested the building of Altonia, insisting that Roy owed it to his position. What was the use of success, he argued, unless one blazoned one's success to the world? The world never believes what it is told, only what it sees. This sophistry appealed strongly to Roy's innate vanity, and he had entered with enthusiasm into all his friend's ideas. Harvey planned the house, engaged the architects, laid out the grounds, suggested



schemes of decoration, until many of the servants and contractors thought he was the man who was paying for it all. Roy thought it extremely generous of Harvey to take so much trouble. It never occurred to him that his friend might have an ulterior motive.

The first time Harvey had seen Eunice at the steel works he had been struck by her uncommon personality. Although he was a man who no longer counted his feminine conquests, Roy Marshall's wife appealed to him in a way different from any women he yet had met. Instinctively, he felt that she did not like him, but instead of arousing his resentment it only made him the more eager to break down that haughty reserve. He dreamed of a conquest more daring than any he had yet undertaken, and it was therefore only part of a carefully thought out plan when he offered his services, which he knew must inevitably bring him closer to Altonia's mistress. It was also part of his plan to gradually wean the husband away from his home and leave the field clear for himself.

Thus, what with the steel works, and the time he spent with Harvey, Roy found but little time for his home, and many and many a day and evening Eunice passed alone. She was too proud to seek the companionship of others, or let the world see that she was neglected. So she suffered alone. One day, when Roy returned after one of his periodical trips to New



York he handed her a box bearing the mark of a famous firm of jewellers.

"A little present for you, dear," he said as he kissed her.

She opened the box and started back in delighted surprise. It was a superb tiara of diamonds. The sparkling stones fairly dazzled her.

- "It will look beautiful on your hair," he said with his old-time winning smile.
- "Thank you, Roy," she murmured. "It is so good of you."

She tried to look pleased, but there was something in the tone of her voice that made him ask her:

- "Don't you like it? You ought to. It cost \$50,000. Not a woman in Pittsburg has got anything like it. You'll create a sensation. But if you'd prefer something else, I'll change it."
- "Oh, no," said Eunice quickly. "It is magnificent. I shall be proud to wear it. Only——"
- "Only what?" he demanded, looking at her in surprise.

She threw her arms around his neck in the old impulsive way.

- "Don't be angry, Roy, dear. The tiara is beautiful—too beautiful for me. But I don't want such presents."
- "What do you mean?" he asked, perplexed, trying to fathom her meaning.

Tears filled her eyes and her voice was choking as she burst out:

"I do not want your presents. Can't you understand that it is you I want? Can't you see that I am eating my heart out here alone day after day, night after night? You are always away at your office, at your club, at your pleasures with Mr. Harvey and I don't know who else. Can't you see how lonely it must be for me? Sometimes I feel as if I should go mad!"

At first, her vehement outburst startled him. Conscious though he was of his own neglect, his wife had always shown herself so submissive to his will that it never occurred to him that she harbored resentment, and might one day revolt. He had surely earned the right to go where he liked, and do what he liked. Had he not crowned their married life with success beyond their wildest dreams? What would not most women give to possess what she enjoyed—all the money she could possibly spend, a magnificent residence, servants, jewels, carriages and all the rest of it? His face darkened, for he thought her unreasonable. She ought to understand that his position was no longer what it was. His duties were more numerous, his responsibilities more weighty.

He endeavored to placate her, seeking excuses, trying to argue with her.

"Why, Eunice, how can you talk like that? If I'm more often away now than I used to be, it is only be-

cause I have to be. My business interests demand it."

- "I'm sorry we ever got rich," she said.
- "Say at once that you're sorry I have made a success of my life," he retorted testily.

It was the first time he had ever spoken harshly to her, and the blood rushed to her face. The injustice of his words hurt her pride.

"No, I can't say that," she replied gently. "Of course, I'm glad of your success. Who has the right to rejoice more than I? Who was more eager for it than I? You can't blame me for regretting those happy evenings at Glendale when I had you all to myself."

Roy knew that she had reason to complain. He had no good excuse to offer for his conduct except that the new life he was leading had proved too fascinating for him to resist. He was conscious of having treated his wife badly, and like most men who find themselves in the wrong, he tried to brazen it out.

"Oh, nonsense!" he exclaimed impatiently; "don't be so sentimental, Eunice. We're not children any longer. Our spooning days are over. Do you suppose I could be where I am to-day if I were to let my mind dwell on mawkish sentimentality? My brain is whirling with figures, calculating profits, devising new schemes for the further development of the Company. With my mind absorbed in such big things you ought to understand that I have no time for trifling."

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Eunice sighed and said nothing and no one could have guessed from her manner that in that heartless speech her pride and affection had received a death blow.

For a few days Roy seemed anxious to make amends. He came home earlier and he avoided dinner engagements with Harvey and his other club acquaintances, but Eunice derived little comfort from the sacrifice. She could see by his abstracted manner that his thoughts were elsewhere. He was moody and silent and answered in monosyllables. Eunice's heart sank. Such companionship as this was worse than none. Gradually he appeared to forget what had passed between them. Once more his chair at the dinner table was empty night after night, the mysterious trips to New York were resumed and things went on as before.

And now as she sat watching the long white stretch of road that led to the railroad depot, a lonely solitary figure amid the deepening shadows of the garden, awaiting the homecoming of her lord, she could not help thinking of the days when she and Teddy used to sit on the porch of the cottage at Glendale, watching for him coming from the steel works, and great silent tears stole down her cheeks as she thought of that scene and the change which time and success had brought. Could it be possible that her happy days were ended forever? Could they never be all in all

to each other as before? Had this cursed wealth really robbed her of him as she had feared and predicted?

Yet only last Saturday something had occurred which once more revived hope in her breast. Roy had told her he was going to New York on business, and did not expect to be back for a week. She was silent for a moment and then she said wistfully:

- "Couldn't you be back for dinner Friday evening, Roy?"
- "No, I'm afraid not," he replied. "There's an important directors' meeting in Wall Street and I've a lot of other business to look after. I don't know when I can get through."

Eunice looked disappointed and her sensitive mouth trembled at the corners.

"Do you know what Friday is, Roy?" she asked.

He looked puzzled and tried to think.

- "No," he stammered, "I don't-"
- "It will be the anniversary of our marriage," she said simply.
- "Oh, that's so!" he rejoined with some embarrassment.
- "I thought you would like to be home for our anniversary," said Eunice. "I had planned a nice little dinner. Even Grace was looking forward to it."

Roy was in a dilemma. He had made engagements which it would be hard to break, but he could not be a brute. It would be cruel to leave her alone on such

a day. Taking a sudden resolution, he turned to kiss his wife good-by.

"All right, dear. I'll come back Friday for dinner. You may expect me on the 6.50 train. We'll have a good time together. Have the automobile at the station and come down to the road to meet me. It will remind me of the old days to see you standing there waiting for me."

He kissed her and was gone.

If he had spoken this way it must be that he still loved her. Perhaps she had imagined all these things which had made her so unhappy. After all, such a busy man has little time for sentiment. Directly she had reminded him of their anniversary, he was at once willing to break his engagements so as to be with her. To please him she had put on one of her prettiest frocks—one that he liked, and in her bosom was a bunch of violets, his favorite flower. She had told the cook to prepare a specially tempting dinner, with dishes he was particularly fond of. She wanted to do all she could to make his home attractive to him, so he would not want to go elsewhere, and after dinner she would sit at the piano and play Beethoven to him.

She would speak frankly, put aside her pride and open her heart to him. She would confess that she loved him more than she ever did. She would overlook anything, forgive everything, if he would only love her as he used to and give her some



of his time. She would be patient and not exacting. And her heart beat more hopefully when she thought how she would throw her arms round his neck and win him back to her by the strength of her love and devotion.

Suddenly there was a patter of running feet and a little girl, daintily dressed, ran through the bushes to where Eunice was sitting. The sun had disappeared completely and it was growing dark.

- "Mother, why are you sitting in the garden so long?" complained the child. "I'm so lonely for you at the house!"
- "I'm waiting for papa, dearest. He'll be here soon and then mamma will come to you."
- "But how do you know papa will come?" persisted the child.
- "He is sure to come. He said he would, dear. It is our anniversary."
- "Papa once promised to bring me a doll which could speak and he didn't," pouted the child.
- "Now run in, dear. It's too late for you to be out. I'll come with papa presently."

The child ran off and Eunice rose and strolled down to the gates that opened on the road. The automobile had gone to the station half an hour before.

For fifteen minutes she waited thus, straining her eyes to see the automobile in the distance, eager to catch the first glance of the face she still loved. But nothing came. She looked at her watch. Half-past seven. The train must be late. Another ten minutes passed and still nothing. An uncomfortable feeling began to come over Eunice. Suppose he did not come, after all? Suddenly she saw a light in the distance. Ah, there it was—the headlight of the automobile! She ran down the road to meet it. The light came closer, but it did not grow in size. She could not understand. It could not be an automobile. Presently the light ran rapidly up. It was a bicycle and riding it was a telegraph messenger. He held out an envelope.

- "Mrs. Roy Marshall, Altonia," he said.
- "Yes—that's for me," faltered Eunice, her heart misgiving her. Her first thought was that Roy had met with an accident. Her face pale, and shaking from fright, she tore open the envelope:
- "Awfully sorry. Am detained in New York. Important business. Roy."
 - "Any answer, m'm?" asked the boy.
- "No—no answer," said Eunice as she turned away with a choking sound in her voice, like a plaintive sob.



CHAPTER III

ENTRAL PARK, in addition to being one of the most beautiful pleasure grounds in the world, serves also the useful purpose of plainly marking out the different districts of the metropolis, segregating the rich and the poor, the cultured and the vulgar, compelling each class to keep within the limits of its respective boundary. Thus on the south, the march northward of the vast business interests is checked at Fifty-ninth Street; on the east the million dollar palaces of the kings of finance are aligned in solitary and competitive grandeur; up north are the flat dwellers of Harlem who also like to be styled New Yorkers, while to the west lies the seductive country of Bohemia with its red-light haunts and its artistic studios.

Rembrandt Hall, No. — Central Park West, was one of the most imposing, as it was one of the most exclusive, studio buildings in New York City. Its studios were eagerly sought after, for not only were they exceptionally spacious, with every convenience and luxury the modern builder could devise, but they were very expensive and consequently very chic and fashionable. The entrance and court were particularly



imposing, appealing at once to the artistic sense. The walls of the main hall were ornamented by ten large panels glorifying the sister arts of Painting, Poetry, Music and Literature. The entire ground floor was laid out in the style of an Algerian garden with rattan chairs, oriental rugs and palmetto trees. The floor itself was of mosaic. Overhead was a lofty dome of stained glass through which shafts of light fell in subdued, rich colors, on a small circular basin filled with floating lilies and having in the centre four nude nymphs who held up goblets from which gushed water. On either side of the court broad marble stairways led to the studios on the upper floors, the steps being covered with a rich pile carpet. There were also two elevators and half a dozen hall boys and attendants in smart uniforms.

Here art made her abode—not the art of Murger's Bohemia, the days when Schaunard, Rodolphe and Marcel were in daily peril of eviction for non-payment of rent, stuck penny candles in wine bottles for purposes of illumination and were content with cracked windows under a leaking attic roof. Those were the days when art starved. To-day art was well paid and those who served it well could afford to pay the exorbitant rents asked at Rembrandt Hall. The present tenants included a distinguished sculptor whose income was not less than \$100,000 a year, two fashionable portrait painters, an artist for a Sunday paper's comic.

supplement who made so much money that he had to employ a secretary to look after it, a famous novelist whose books sold by the hundreds of thousands, a prima donna who received \$3,000 every time she sang, an actor who had been playing the same part for two consecutive years and getting rich at the rate of \$2,000 a week and a playwright who could write six successful plays a year. Such people as these did not have to economize in the matter of rent.

One of the two fashionable portraitists already alluded to was Cleo Gordon, who was reputed to make a large income with her brush. Beyond the fact that she was very beautiful and very clever no one really knew anything about her affairs, but it was supposed that she had money. That was the only way in which the world could explain her expensive manner of living, her beautiful toilettes, her jewels, her carriages. her entertainments. She, herself, always said she came from California, that lusty State which has given so many children to art and literature, but on the subject of her parentage she was silent. No Californian had ever heard of her or her family and thus she remained a delightful mystery. According to her account she was so successful in idealizing a particularly ill-favored woman that the news ran like wild-fire through all the drawing-rooms of New York. No longer need the too truthful camera betray the ravages of time and the Here was an artist who could cruelties of nature.

make ugly women positively beautiful. From that time on Cleo Gordon had all the portraits to paint she wanted, and as she combined business sagacity with artistic sense, it was not surprising that after a year or two she was able to move from her dingy attic studio to the more luxurious quarters of Rembrandt Hall.

Her studio, situated three flights up, commanded a magnificent view of the park, and in the richness of its appointments and furnishings was one of the most luxurious and artistic in New York. The studio proper was an enormous room, fully thirty feet high and perfectly lighted. Running all round the room, about fifteen feet from the floor, was a balcony giving access to the sleeping apartments and connecting with the studio by a graceful staircase. The dining-room, butler's pantry, etc., were off the studio on the ground floor. The furnishings were rich in the extreme, the harmony of color and general arrangement betraying the hand of an expert in artistic effect. The inlaid floor was highly polished and covered for the most part with costly oriental rugs. One wall was entirely covered from ceiling to balcony by an immense tapestry depicting a scene from the Trojan wars, and on the wall at the far end of the studio, so placed as to immediately catch the eye on entering, was a large painting of Venus and Adonis, believed to be genuine Rubens. Rare silk oriental rugs hung from the balcony and there were cosy corners everywhere, inviting





sensuous repose. Over a Turkish divan was suspended a bronze lamp of Byzantine design in which a rare oil was burning and emitting a fragrant perfume-like The whole decoration scheme was oriental and exotic in character. Paintings in massive gilt frames, marble and bronze statuary, delicate Japanese cloisonné vases, sacred Russian icons, hideous Chinese gods, beautiful Indian ivory carvings, glittering battle-axes and spears and skin-covered shields, relics of savage warfare, ecclesiastical stoles heavily embroidered with jewels, antique wood carvings from Venice. tiger skins from India, marquetry cabinets filled with bric-à-brac, books richly bound in vellum, a carved stone mantel Renaissance style-all these curios of the art world were mingled in picturesque and artistic confusion, while an easel here and there bearing a canvas just commenced, showed that it was a real workshop as well as a show place.

Two persons were in the studio late this October afternoon. One was Cleo Gordon, who sat, palette in hand, giving the finishing touches to the portrait of a man seen in profile. Every few minutes the artist rose from her stool and stepped back in order to get a new perspective of the work. Then, apparently satisfied, she turned with a smile to her sitter.

[&]quot;Aren't vou tired?" she asked.

[&]quot;Who could ever tire of sitting here watching you?" Cleo pursed her lips, in pretended anger. She was

so accustomed to such speeches that they sounded commonplace.

"Please don't," she protested. "All men say those things. I thought you were different from other men. That's why I first took a fancy to you and asked you to come here."

"And now you're disappointed?"

"I did not say so," she rejoined, turning her head away so he could admire her profile, almost classic in the purity of its outline and crowned by a wealth of Titian hair done up in a loose Psyche knot, and which the strong light from above touched here and there with golden glints.

She wore a loose-fitting æsthetic gown, low at the neck where it was fastened with an antique jewel, and encircled round the slim waist by a gold girdle studded with turquoises. The alabaster whiteness of her skin caused her delicate face to look transparent in the half light of the studio, and with the graceful slope of her admirably moulded shoulders and bust, her rosy voluptuous mouth, her splendid blue eyes, shaded by long dreamy lashes, she presented a picture of almost ideal youthful loveliness. As he gazed upon her with the enthusiastic and impersonal interest with which one views a work of art, Roy wondered how any human being could be so perfect.

Cleo was beautiful and she knew it. She had known it ever since the time when, a half-starved girl of four-

teen, she one day caught a glimpse of her glorious hair and eyes in a mirror. She soon realized their power when the men turned after her in the street, and she was not slow to learn that the world, especially the masculine part of it, loves a pretty face. As she grew to womanhood, she was interested in only two thingsher art and her personal appearance, and the latter Even when she was poor she always came first. dressed and lived like a queen. Even when forced to live in cheap boarding houses she must have her private bath, her late sleep in the morning and all the other comforts, no matter what hardships she suffered in other directions. She would go without enough to eat, but she would wear the handsomest gowns and most stylish hats. Any one seeing her on Fifth Avenue would take her for a millionaire's wife, whereas, if she had dropped her purse all one would find in it would be a few cents and probably a pawn ticket. During the first year of her art apprenticeship in New York, when her benefactor limited her expenses to \$25 a week, she wore sixteen different hats and eight gowns, all "creations," in a single season. An expert milliner and dressmaker, she made all these hats and dresses herself, so what would have been impossible for another woman was mere child's play to her.

Her one desire in life was to exercise over men the power the beautiful woman wields. She was the antique Siren incarnate, luring men on to destruction by the power of her beauty, and heartlessly treating them with contempt directly they were at her feet. She was not mercenary nor was she sensual. She made with her brush all the money she wanted, and one of the secrets of her power over men was her complete independence. Men who had become her slaves showered costly gifts upon her, but most of these she declined. If she accepted one, it was a mark of special favor. one could question her morals. Her reputation in this respect was spotless. The world said cynically that she must be a prodigy of innocence or a prodigy of cleverness. None of the men with whom she was on intimate terms could boast of a victory. She seemed to have no heart. She was as much a mystery to her intimates as to outsiders. All she appeared to desire was the power of bringing men to her feet. When that was done she lost all interest in them, they could go. As she herself admitted, she had been attracted to Roy because he was different from the other men she met. Most of her men friends were, like herself. artists-painters or sculptors, or else men who could discuss art matters glibly and with authority, such as critics, journalists and authors. She liked Roy just because he was not versed in the jargon of the studios. He knew nothing about "open air" schools, "genre" painting, or impressionism, but he could tell of wonderful feats accomplished in the industrial world, he could give a fascinating account of a marvellous empire of steel over which he and a few others virtually ruled as monarchs. This was power, and Cleo would not have been true to herself had she not felt the potent influence of its spell. She knew Roy wa very rich, but she cared nothing for that. She knew he was married, but that did not concern her. She only knew that he was one of the central figures of the steel world, and it pleased her vanity to think that she possessed the power to attract and hold a man of such force and character.

Moreover, his face and the shape of his head-aggressive, alert, masterful-appealed strongly to her artistic sense and she had asked permission to make a few studies of him, permission which he had readily granted. This, naturally, had necessitated several visits to the studio and it was not long before their casual acquaintance had grown into a delightful intimacy. The personality of the woman herself was so magnetic and the atmosphere of this art world so novel and attractive that Roy could not resist paying a visit to Rembrandt Hall every time his business affairs took him to New York. Cleo encouraged the acquaintance in a way in which she was an adept. She usually had tempting little dinners for him served in the studio. where they were secluded from prying eyes, and they dined luxuriously tête à tête, waited on by Achmet, Cleo's Ethiopian servant, who wore the picturesque dress of his native country. After Achmet had served Turkish coffee in *demi-tasses* of daintiest Sèvres, Cleo would sit on a low divan near him and sing Southern melodies to the accompaniment of a mandolin.

The portrait on which she was now engaged had been started three weeks before. It was to be Cleo's chief exhibit at the forthcoming American Artists' Exposition and then it was to go to Altonia.

"Does Mrs. Marshall know you are sitting for this picture?" she asked as she went on working.

Roy hesitated and the lie was ready on his lips. But he thought better of it, for he replied hastily:

"No, I didn't tell her. I did not know how she might take it. Women are so queer."

He felt like a cur directly the words were out of his mouth. He felt that his presence in this studio was an act of treachery to Eunice, but he had gone too far to retreat now. For months he had known that he and his wife were drifting further and further apart, and instead of blaming himself alone, he nourished a sullen resentment against Eunice. She did not understand him, he argued to himself, and never would. She was unable to comprehend that a man in his position could not be kept in apron strings. Now he was rich, he wanted to enjoy to the full all that life had to offer. He had unbosomed himself to his friend Harvey, who professed the greatest sympathy and gave him much valuable advice. Women, said Harvey, were all alike,





conventional, small-minded, unreasonable creatures whose lives ran in narrow channels. That was why he had remained single. The married man was the unfortunate victim of a social convention who soon discovered that the shackles he wore round his ankles were just as real and irksome as those of the antebellum slave. Women were the most unpractical beings, they saw everything from a narrow, distorted viewpoint, they could not understand that a man might be so constituted physically that certain tastes and instincts could be curbed only under protest. married men, irritated by petty nagging, he insisted, were constantly on the verge of open rebellion, and if there were not more divorces it was because man, as a rule, was a good-natured, patient, long-suffering animal, willing to put up with almost anything rather than incur notoriety. Marriage was the greatest blunder in the world, for it violated one of the strongest of nature's laws, which distinctly favored polygamy. If the average husband was faithful in wedlock it was either for lack of opportunity or because he was a natural-born-Joseph. Such were Leonard Harvey's views, and with such a mentor it was hardly surprising that Roy's notions of what a man owed to the mother of his children had become warped and distorted.

At last, tired of working, Cleo threw down her brushes, and rose.

"How do you like it?" she asked.

He left the place where he was sitting and came over to inspect the progress made.

"I think you've flattered me," he said. "I'm not as good-looking as that."

She laughed, a low musical laugh which sounded like the purling of water running over small pebbles.

"Of course you're not," she rejoined. "Didn't you know that I idealize all my sitters? That's how I made my reputation."

She ran up the staircase leading to the balcony and disappeared. Presently she returned with something in her hand.

"Do you like that better?" she said.

It was a pen and ink sketch of Roy, so admirably done as to look like an engraving. The pose was so natural and the execution so perfect that it looked lifelike.

"Yes, that's more as I am. But when did you do that?" demanded Roy, taken by surprise.

"Oh, I amused myself doing it in odd moments. I caught the pose one day you were sitting and I liked it so much that I made a sketch of it myself. I want you to autograph it, for I shall keep it as a souvenir."

She brought him pen and ink.

"What shall I say?" he asked, fingering the pen nervously.

"Whatever you feel," she retorted carelessly. She

was standing close by him and her hair touched his shoulder. A vague subtle odor seemed to come from her and intoxicate him. She lifted her head and her splendid young eyes met his. For a moment he trembled. He could hardly see. Then, hardly knowing what he was doing, he put his arm round her, and said feverishly:

"What I feel," he said, "what I feel—that you are the most fascinating woman in the whole world—that's what I feel."

She clapped her hands like a child.

"That'll do nicely-put that."

He took the pen and under the portrait wrote:

"To the lovely Cleo Gordon—the most fascinating woman in the world—the everlasting homage of Roy Marshall."

"Oh, that's lovely," she said when he laid the pen down.

His face was flushed and his hand trembled, from a guilty conscience or amorous passion, he did not know which. She turned to go.

"I'll take it upstairs. I keep it with the treasures of my boudoir," she said.

Before she could reach the stairs Roy intercepted her. Seizing her round the waist, he cried:

"Where's my pay?"

He tried to kiss her, but she quickly averted her face and her lithe body slipped out of his grasp and

she was on top of the stairs laughing at him over the balcony before he had recovered from his surprise. Shaking her finger at him, she cried:

"Oh, fie, Mr. Married Man. What would your wife say?"

With another merry peal of laughter she disappeared within her boudoir. When she came downstairs again, she found Roy sulkily pulling on his gloves, prior to taking his departure.

- "Are you cross with me?" she asked coyly. She looked archly up into his face and he could not help smiling.
 - "Do me one favor?" he said.
 - "What may that be?" she asked.
- "Please don't mention my wife's name, here. She and I don't get along any too well, and it only annoys me to have her name dragged in all the time."
- "It shall be as you wish, sir," she said mockingly. Then she added, "Now, as I treated you badly for signing the sketch, I'm going to make amends. I want you to come Friday and have dinner with me."
 - "Friday?" he echoed.
- "Yes, the 25th. We shall be all alone. I won't have any one else—just you. And I'll be awfully nice to you to make up for this afternoon. Say you'll come."

There was a pleading note in her voice and a promise in her eyes. Her rosy mouth turned up to his seemed like a luscious cherry which he could bite



at will. It was hard to resist such an invitation, yet Friday was his wedding anniversary. He had promised Eunice to be home. He shook his head.

- "I'm afraid I can't," he said.
- "Why not?" she insisted.
- "I have another engagement," he replied.
- "Another engagement?" she exclaimed, her eyes darkening. The thought that he could give any one the preference over her angered her. It never occurred to her that it could be with his wife. "Who is it?" she demanded petulantly.
 - "My wife," he answered laconically.

They both looked at each other in silence for a moment and then she burst into a merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, yes, I forgot," she cried ironically, "you're a married man. Your wife expects you home. Go to her like the dutiful husband you are! Hurry back to Pittsburg or she'll scold. I'm not keeping you. Go—go—go!" she said impetuously, almost fiercely. "You have no right to stay here. I don't want you. Go—go to her."

She turned from him, but he caught her in his arms. "No," he whispered in her ear, "I'll stay. I'll send a telegram to Pittsburg."

CHAPTER IV

MONG the many places of interest which cosmopolitan New York had to show the country visitor none excited more eager curiosity than Martinetti's, that world-famous restaurant near Washington Square which was known from one end of the continent to the other as the wickedest place in all Manhattan. The first question asked of the artist of the megaphone by the smug, self-respecting passenger on the "rubber neck" wagon was the whereabouts of Martinetti's, nor did he rest until, with a knowing wink, the conductor pointed out a quiet-looking house painted white with green shutters and yelled: "On your right Martinetti's, the famous restaurant, the scene of the sensational Smiley dinner, when a nude young lady was served in a pie and a lot of other monkey shines not fit to be discussed on top of a family coach." And this cargo of precious bucolic soulsstaid spinsters, spectacled school marms, loquacious drummers, lantern-jawed professors, rotund parsons and hayseed yaps-conscious of their own rectitude. gaped in open-mouthed amazement that a place with so bad a character should have so modest and decorous an exterior.



Martinetti's deserved its international reputation. Whenever a startling scandal shocked the town, Martinetti's always had something to do with it; when a Wall Street plunger suddenly did away with himself, he usually had the bad taste to select Martinetti's as his passing-on place; whenever a gay deceiver was publicly horsewhipped by an irate wife, Martinetti's was invariably the scene of the battle; whenever a party of convivial spirits wished to give an exclusive little party where they could do what they liked, entertain whom they liked in the way that they liked, Martinetti's was just the place for it. In short, the demurelooking house with the green shutters was notorious for its veiled ladies, its decolleté suppers in cabinets particulier, its gay proceedings behind hermetically sealed doors and windows, and orgies of all kinds which went on nightly right under the discreet nose of the police. The mad pursuit of pleasure, regardless of health or cost-in other words, the pace that kills-that was the kind of life one saw every day at Martinetti's. All morning and afternoon dead and silent as the tomb, with the coming of night the restaurant flashed into a place of electric splendor, brilliant with crowds of well-dressed men and fashionably gowned women, the air filled with appetizing odors of delicate cooking and the exhilarating aroma of rare wines, while dozens of well-bred waiters who

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saw everything and said nothing, moved noiselessly and discreetly about.

From the street the restaurant appeared as quiet and dark as the rest of the houses on the block, the curtains being tightly drawn and every sound muffled behind double doors. Only the line of carriages waiting patiently at the entrance for their bibulous owners betraved the fact that there was life within. At Martinetti's they did not cater to a transient trade. In fact, it was discouraged. If a stranger happened to find his way in, he would be told that all the tables were engaged, which was only a polite way of telling him that he was not wanted. The place had its regular patrons and they paid handsomely enough to enjoy exclusive service. Leonard Harvey was an old customer and a privileged habitué. If he needed anything quickly, from the loan of an umbrella when caught in the rain to cashing a check for \$5,000 to pay for a gambling debt, he knew he could get it at Martinetti's. When he wanted to give a little supper party for men or lady guests, he had the choice of all the private rooms and special pains were taken by the chef to get up a novel and toothsome menu; and, what was more important, once the coffee and cigars had been served and the waiters had been given the signal to withdraw, he and his party were not again disturbed. In vulgar parlance, he had the run of the place, and being a bachelor with plenty of women

acquaintances, he found Martinetti's more convenient than an apartment for entertaining them.

He had brought Roy to the restaurant the first time they were together in New York, and the steel maker was fascinated by everything he saw there. The insolent beauty of the women—he did not stop to see if it were real or artificial—the sensuous strains of the gypsy music, the gayety bordering on license, aroused in him the animalism which had been curbed for years, and he felt a fierce longing to rush into this gay life which beckoned to him even if, like the moth in the flame, he were to singe his wings. His marriage vow. Eunice's serene, wistful face-if he thought of these at all it was with impatience. How could any intelligent woman, he argued to himself, expect a man to go through life without tasting its Domesticity, connubial felicity—that fiercer joys? was all very well, but he had been through all that. For fifteen years he had slaved and stinted himself uncomplainingly. Now he was rich he wanted to see more of life. He was a man of the world-not a hermit. How the world would laugh if they knew that the famous steel maker was expected to go straight home to his wife every evening like any little \$15 a week counter jumper!

To-day he had come to New York specially for Harvey's long-announced birthday feast which would tax the ingenuity of Martinetti's chef to the utmost. Aware that the after effects of such an elaborate spread often last longer than the dinner itself, he expected to be absent from Pittsburg for at least a week. He had simply told Eunice that he did not expect to be back for some days and she had asked no questions. In fact, she had not spoken to him at all, save when it was absolutely necessary, ever since their wedding anniversary when he failed to come home as he had promised. On his return, he had tried to explain, but she had listened coldly with eyes averted. A wall of ice seemed to be growing higher between them each day. They were like strangers under the same He noticed that she looked pale and unhappy and there were moments when he felt remorse, when he felt he could take her in his arms and implore her But when his mind conjured up vivid forgiveness. pictures of delightful hours spent at Rembrandt Hall, when he thought of Harvey's companionship and what he would lose by giving it all up, his flesh was weak and he had not the courage to break off with the life he was leading. The situation at Altonia was becoming more strained and distasteful to him every hour and he was glad of any excuse to rush away to the city.

He had just reached Martinetti's and was getting a check for his hat and coat from an attendant when Harvey came up and slapped him on the back.

"Hello, Roy, old man, I'm glad to see you. Why so

blue-looking? Wake up, old sport. You're going to have the time of your life to-night. All the girls are coming."

"I was glad to get away," growled Roy.

Harvey understood.

"Same old story, eh?" he said. "Well, it's no use worrying. You can't change women. They're stubborn as mules once they've got an idea in their heads. The only thing to do is simply to ignore them. Lead your own life, man, don't let others make it for you. Come and have a cocktail. It'll cheer you up."

At that instant Signor Martinetti, the proprietor, came up. He was a fat little Italian with jet-black curly hair and clean-shaven face and the manners of a Chesterfield.

"Bon soir, messieurs!"

He always spoke French to his guests. Firstly, it was more fashionable; secondly, his patrons understood it more readily than Italian; thirdly, it gratified his vanity to be taken for a Frenchman. It gave his house more tone.

"Well, Marty, old chap," said Harvey familiarly, are you going to give us a good feed?"

"Mais oui, Monsieur Harvey, mais oui, as always. You nevaire have eat bad in my house, is it not? Tonight you and your friends vill feast like emperors. You vill have Russian caviar on socle of ice, ze daintiest of hors d'œuvres, green turtle Amontillado, a



soup that vill make you dream, mousseline Isabelle, a specialty of ze house, canvasback duck à la Duchesse, capon soufflé with mushrooms—oh, you vill be satisfied, the *chef* has done miracles!" He gave a quick glance round to see if any one was within hearing and then he added, "And ze ladies—are they come?"

"Not yet," said Harvey. "They'll come when we are at table. I do not want any of the men to see them. I want it to be a complete surprise. You must give them a room where they can dress. When the cigars are served I will give the signal for them to come in. You understand?"

"Parfaitement! Perfectly!"

"Is there any danger of the police taking a look in?" asked Roy timidly.

Signor Martinetti looked pained at the mere suggestion of such a contingency.

"Ze police in my house," he said, shrugging his shoulders. "I am too big a restaurant—too well known—too famous for ze police to dare interfere with my guests. Non, monsieur, no danger of zat. Zey come here, oh yes," here he rolled his eyes significantly, "but only to see me on private business. Ze police, zey are my best friends. Don't be afraid while I am here, is it not?"

Other men invited to the dinner, friends of Harvey and Roy, now began to arrive in quick succession, all in eager expectation of the dinner, and they stood



around in little groups, whispering and laughing as one told the other of the surprises that their host Harvey had up his sleeve. When they had all assembled in the ante-room the maitre d'hôtel threw open the folding doors leading to the dining-room, and, prepared though they all were to see everything done well, an exclamation of delighted surprise fell from every one's lips.

The room, which was the most luxurious in the house, was oblong in shape and every inch of the wall space was lined with white marble surmounted with a bronze frieze with figures in relief. The flat polished surface of the marble was relieved at regular intervals by fluted columns between which were suspended fine tapestries, giving the rich effect of Greek simplicity and chaste beauty. The table. extending from one end of the room to the other, was in the form of an elongated horseshoe, the host and his more intimate friends, including Roy, being seated at the top of the curve and the others at each of the tapering sides. In the open space in the centre formed by the shoe, was a miniature lake of real water on which floated illuminated lilies, the sides being heavily banked with moss and American beauty roses, among the latter being concealed fountains of perfumed water that filled the air with sweet-scented spray. At the head of the lake was the nude figure of a dancing bacchante, almost life size, executed in silver and

holding out a crystal champagne glass as if inviting all present to join her in a toast to pleasure and love. Overhead, suspended from the lofty ceiling and running all round the table, was a string of illuminated roses, each flower containing a tiny electric bulb which made it transparent and enhanced the ardor of its There were exactly thirty-eight of them, the number being that of the years the host had lived and they were intended as a novel variation on the classic illuminated candles that delight the birthday feasts of children. The table was richly decorated with elaborate silver and glass services and flowers, while at each man's plate was a souvenir of the occasion-in each case it being a costly article from Tiffany's-a scarf pin for this one, a set of studs for another, a cigarette holder for a third and so on. The souvenirs alone cost \$2,000 and the florists' bill was little below that figure. "But what's the odds?" said Harvey. "One is thirty-eight only once in a lifetime."

Directly the guests had taken their seats and the dinner began, the soft strains of an orchestra came floating from above, the musicians being concealed from sight in a kind of loft above the dining-room. They were playing a Strauss waltz.

"That's as it should be," approved Roy. "I love to hear music when it's far away, but I don't like to see the facial contortions of the musicians. It spoils all the illusion."

Every one set to with keen appetite and there was a constant ripple of admiring comment for the princely spread which their host had set before them. When the soup and fish had been removed, Harvey touched a button and from the glass held forth by the silver Bacchante gushed real champagne sparkling and foaming. Filling his glass and bidding the others follow suit, Harvey offered the toast:

"Here's to our wives and sweethearts—may they never meet!"

This was greeted by a wild burst of applause all round the table. A good many of them had wives and nearly all had sweethearts, so the sentiment struck home. The wines were now beginning to take effect and some one, in response, struck up For he's a jolly good fellow, in which everybody joined, keeping time by knocking the glasses with their knives.

"Who's all right?" cried a man at the far end of the table.

"Leonard Harvey's all right!" yelled another, and for a moment or two no one could hear himself speak for the noise.

The waiters were serving the choicest dish of the menu, woodcocks in cases Vatel style, flanked by braised cardons with Madeira sauce. Harvey thoughtfully warned his friends to eat sparingly of this toothsome morsel, in order to leave room for the terrapin Newburg which was to follow.

The waiters glided rapidly and noiselessly about, serving dishes, filling glasses with the expert rapidity born of long practice, and Signor Martinetti himself gave a look in from time to time to see that everything was going right. The guests, while busy masticating the delicacies put before them, were busy speculating as to the nature of the surprise which their host was going to give them. They knew well that the dinner, luxurious though it be, was only incidental to what was to follow. Some opined that a vaudeville performance had been arranged, an incorrigible joker said he knew positively that Marcuso, the famous tenor, had been engaged, another predicted it would be a couple of high-kicking skirt dancers—all hoped secretly that it would be something épicé.

The general curiosity was soon satisfied. When the coffee and liquors were served Roy Marshall rose, amid cheers, to make a eulogy of their host.

"Speech! Speech!" yelled a raw, beardless youth full of enthusiasm from a couple of quarts of Ruinart. The other men, glad of any excuse, to give vent to their keyed-up spirits, all started to yell at once and for a few minutes Roy was unable to make himself heard. When they quieted down he proceeded.

He had known Leonard Harvey, he said, for nearly fourteen years. In all that time he had found him not only a man gifted with enormous talent—talent which would have made him successful in any walk

of life—but he was also a very prince of good fellows. Whenever a man felt seedy, or was seized with the blues, he had merely to send for Harvey to be instantly restored to a normal condition. That was because Harvey allowed nothing to worry him. He had discovered the secret of perpetual youth. He enjoyed life, every moment of it, and he helped his friends to enjoy it. That was why they had all come there to-night—to celebrate the thirty-eighth birthday of a good comrade, and all should take particular pleasure in drinking a toast to their amiable host. Extending his glass he cried:

"Gentlemen, here's to Leonard Harvey! May he continue to prosper in his amours!"

A wild tumult hailed this academic effort, bottles being turned over and glasses smashed as the now completely befuddled guests tried to stagger to their feet to drink the toast. Hardly a man was sober. All talked at the same time, and one man was with difficulty prevented from standing on the table.

Tapping for order, Harvey, his handsome face flushed with wine, rose to reply:

He had called this dinner, he said, not to celebrate his birthday or to worry his friends into figuring how many more birthdays he could reasonably be expected to have. He had summoned them here to have a good time and he wanted them to have one. He hoped they had enjoyed their dinner, but he need hardly tell them that the pièce de résistance was yet to come.

Those of his listeners who were in a condition to understand what he was saying leaned eagerly forward. He continued:

He had reserved a little surprise until the last when he expected his guests would be in a frame of mind to appreciate it better. They would now proceed with the entertainment part of the programme.

He resumed his seat amid frantic cheers, while all the diners gaped in maudlin fashion, wondering what would happen next. Harvey beckoned the maitre d'hôtel and whispered to him. Immediately all the waiters left the room, Harvey rising to close the door after them and locking it. He then returned to his seat at the table and touched a button under the cloth. Instantly the color of everything changed. Whereas a moment before everything had been white, now it was a soft blue. At the same instant the invisible orchestra began to play a Hungarian Czardas. dreamy, voluptuous music passed over the diners like the sigh of unsatisfied desire, vibrating passionately as it swelled into tempestuous waves of harmony. Gradually increasing in volume, it suddenly sprang into furious, consuming flame, the soul of the melody flooding the room and arousing even the dulled senses of the guests.

Once more the host, another Cagliostro, touched the

magic button and again the colors of the table changed. This time the room was suffused with red-purple, the regal tones appearing to rise from the very depths of the miniature lake. Suddenly, just as the orchestra was again soaring upward toward voluptuous heights, the doors of the anteroom slid back, disclosing purple draperies from behind which emerged six dancing girls.

They were costumed as the daughter of Herodias when she danced before Herod. The head dress consisted of two gold bands encircling the hair, with large jewelled pieces over the ears. Over each breast was a jewelled shield, the two being connected by a pendant of pearls. Round their hips they wore oriental drapery of bright colors tightly drawn and fastened low in front by a large antique jewel. The lower part of their limbs, visible under the drapery, was bare, and on their feet were sandals, with gold bands round the ankles.

The girls were very young, the eldest not more than twenty, and each was beautiful and perfect enough in face and body to be a sculptor's model. Lithe and graceful as young fawns, they danced with the nimbleness and abandon of forest nymphs, following the measure of the music, advancing tiptoe with white arms outspread in languorous gesture, their sinuous bodies undulating to the rhythm. Round the table they went, three on either side, almost touching

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the diners, who gazed at them stupefied. Having completed the circle they reunited at the place where they had entered and there began a new dance, a remarkable expression of human energy and intoxicating passion. For a brief instant, they stood motionless, poised in perfect balance, then with a leap of delirious joy they commenced to gyrate with increasing speed and violence until, faint and dizzy from their efforts, they almost fell from exhaustion into the laps of Harvey's delighted guests.

The spell thus rudely broken, the men rushed from their seats, each eager to play the rôle of chivalrous knight to the maiden in distress, and every one crowded excitedly round the six girls, showing a solicitude that was truly touching. But the anxiety was groundless. It took more than that to kill the Six Houris of the Harem, as the damsels were billed on the boards of an uptown music hall.

"Give us some fizz, and we'll be all right!" cried one of the girls, her coarse, hoarse voice being in incongruous contrast with the grace and refinement displayed in her dancing. Now she was herself; a moment before she was the artist.

An emergency brigade rushed six quarts of champagne to the corner of the room where Harvey, Roy, and others were fanning the dancers with napkins.

"Say! That's great!" exclaimed one girl as she

tossed off at one gulp a glass of the sparkling golden beverage. "Let's have another, Johnny!"

The Johnny thus appealed to refilled her glass and continued the delicate attention until of the six quarts there remained not a drop. The girls now admitted they felt better. In fact, they soon got jolly and by way of emphasizing her good spirits, one of them allowed a man to perch her on his shoulder and scamper round the room with her.

This set the room in a roar and was the signal for general demoralization and license. Other couples started to gallop around, the men playing the part of high-spirited ponies, their less favored colleagues running after them and trying to snatch away their riders, every one convulsed with laughter. Some of the guests, too weak, from too frequent libations, to take part in the more strenuous sports, had captured one of the dancers and perched her on the table in front of them, where they plied her with wine until she was soon in as maudlin a condition as themselves.

Then some one suggested a couchee-couchee. The brilliant idea was hailed with enthusiasm and the six dancers, already in various stages of inebriation, were escorted to a part of the room which had been cleared for the dance. One of the girls, unable to walk, clung lovingly to Harvey's neck and finally she had to be carried to the side of the room and put to sleep on two chairs. Then the crowd gathered round those of

the dancers who were still able to stand on their feet.

The musicians aloft struck up the slow weird strains of the languorous Turkish dance. Harvey gave the button another twist and the table and part of the room was bathed in a rich red glow, enveloping with a ruddy glare the picturesque figures of the dancers, and the sensual faces of the onlookers, flushed with wine. The girls began to dance, contorting their lithe, sinuous bodies in measure with the music, advancing, retreating, with suggestive and provocative gestures, their jewels flashing a dozen different colors as they twisted and turned under the electric lights.

Gradually the girls grew bolder, introducing daring innovations in the dance which elicited wild cheers from the onlookers until it was almost impossible to restrain the ardor of the men. Roy whispered to Harvey:

- "Aren't they going too far?"
- "Oh, let them be—the boys are enjoying it."

A girl gave a scream. One of the men had spilled a glass of wine down her back. This broke up the dance and then pandemonium reigned. The men lost their heads and Harvey soon found he could not check them. Then some one put out the lights. The men laughed and the girls gave smothered screams, while Harvey angrily demanded that the lights be turned on again. He was groping about trying to find the

electric button when suddenly there came a violent knocking at the door:

"Open in the name of the law!"

The girls stopped their gyrations, the music ceased, the men turned pale.

Whoever it was demanding admittance, did not wait for the door to be opened, for almost simultaneously it was rudely broken open and a police sergeant rushed in followed by a score of policemen and detectives in plain clothes. Behind them was Signor Martinetti, his face ashen.

- "Pinched!" cried one of the girls.
- "Ain't it horrid? Them fly cops is too fresh!" said another, turning a bottle of champagne upside down in order to squeeze out the last drop.
- "Every person in this room is under arrest!" shouted the sergeant.
- "What's the meaning of this outrage?" demanded Harvey, advancing. "Do you know who I am?"
- "I don't care a d—n who you are! I have a warrant. You're caught red-handed. Disorderly conduct is the charge." Turning to a roundsman, he said: "Get some clothes on those women and hustle them with the men over to the station house in the patrol wagon."
- "What does this mean, you wretched dago?" demanded Harvey, furious, of the trembling proprietor.
 - "Vraiement, Monsieur Harvey, it is not my fault,"

replied Martinetti with a shrug of his shoulders. "Zey come here without a moment's warning. It's a new Captain in the precinct. He vants to advertise himself. Vraiement, I am desolate. It vill ruin my house."

"Come, come, stop your chinnin'!" growled the sergeant. "Hustle downstairs, all of you, and get into the patrol wagon. You can explain to the Captain at the station house."

Roy was overwhelmed. Such an eventuality as this he could not have foreseen. Great beads of perspiration burst from every pore and he felt sick as he thought of what his arrest would mean—the whole affair in the newspapers, public ridicule, Eunice's silent reproaches, the scandal, a man of his position caught participating in a bawdy dinner! He grasped Harvey's arm, exclaiming:

"We're ruined, Harvey! What can be done? I'd give a million dollars rather than this had happened."

Harvey laughed indifferently.

"Don't worry, old man, it will come out all right. At the worst we can laugh it off. The most they can do to us is to impose a fine. The thing to do is to try and keep it out of the papers. I think we can."

But Harvey in his optimism did not take into consideration the ubiquitous newspaper reporter. When the patrol wagons reached the station house and Leonard Harvey and his guests were lined up in front

of the desk, they might have succeeded in concealing their identity by giving false names, only the drifting straw of fate that influences destinies blew in their direction. At the moment the patrol wagons drove up with their sorry, bedraggled-looking cargoes, a reporter of the *Vulture* happened to be in the station. He immediately recognized Roy and when in answer to the Captain's demand for his name Roy answered weakly "James Stillman," he at once stepped up and said loudly:

"Hello, Mr. Marshall, how are you? I haven't seen you since I interviewed you in your office in Pittsburg."

That spoiled everything, but Harvey thought there was still a chance. Taking the reporter aside and showing him a fifty dollar bill, he whispered:

"Don't you think you could forget he is Mr. Marshall?"

The reporter laughed. He understood they wanted to bribe him and he felt really sorry for their predicament. But he owed a duty to his newspaper, and, what was more, he resented the imputation that he could be bought.

"No, siree—this is too good a story for my paper. It's worth more than fifty dollars to the *Vulture*."

CHAPTER V

Pulture and other sensational papers gave exaggerated accounts of the affair, illustrated with lurid pictures by artists with fertile imaginations, and there were also portraits of the principal participants and grave editorials, castigating the officers of the Empire Steel Company for behavior beneath the dignity of men holding lofty positions in the commercial world, and drawing attention generally to the demoralizing influence of great wealth and the follies that of late had characterized the doings of the newly rich.

Aside, however, from this criticism in the public press and the ironical laughter they had to submit to from their friends, the consequences, as Harvey had predicted, were not serious. They were all discharged on their appearance in court that same morning and in a few days the incident was forgotten.

But there was one who could not laugh over the dinner or forget it. That was Eunice. She had first heard of it through a Pittsburg paper which naturally "played it up" for all it was worth, and later she learned further details from Mr. Dexter and other

friends who called to offer their sympathy. When she first read the headlines "Pittsburg Steel Men Ar- . rested," it never occurred to her that Roy might be one of them, and when she read his name, together with Leonard Harvey's and the rest, she almost fainted. It did not seem possible that the Roy Marshall who had been arrested and taken to the station house like a criminal could be the same Roy Marshall who for so many years had lain so close to her heart. and shared with her their mutual grief and happiness. For months she had realized that the sudden flood of riches had wrecked both their lives. It had made an entirely different man of Roy and a lonely, brokenhearted woman of herself. He had ceased to love her -of that she felt sure, and she had tried to harden her heart against his growing indifference and to forget, by devoting all her time and attention to her little daughter. But there were times when it was impossible to prevent reverting to the past, when her memory conjured up Roy as he was when he first asked her to be his wife and as he was in the happy Glendale days when they had no money-only each other's affection. Then her eyes would fill with hot. blinding tears, and little Grace would ask:

"Why are you crying, mamma? Are you unhappy?"

What would be the end? They could not go on living this way, each practically a stranger to the

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other. Why not accept the inevitable and separate now? Their paths in life lay apart, that was very clear, but which of them would say first the word that would separate them? She could not, for in her heart she still loved him in spite of his neglect, in spite of his indifference, in spite of his shameful conduct, in spite of everything. A woman who loves as she had loved, who has given of herself as she had, can not tear the love out of her heart in a day. After all, she could not forget that he was the father of her dead baby and of little Grace.

Roy had returned home a few days after the famous dinner, but he made no allusion to his escapade. They sat facing each other at table, each distrustful of the other, glad of the presence of the servants, which at least precluded the possibility of a scene. Except at table they seldom met and then they only exchanged the most commonplace remarks.

One afternoon, some time after the dinner scandal, Mrs. Dexter dropped in to see Eunice.

"Oh, my dear," she said, "I'm going to New York to-morrow and I want you to go with me. You know I said I would show you a studio which has a boudoir just the way you want to fix yours. You come with me and I'll take you to see it."

Eunice's first impulse was to say no. She was in no mood to think about arranging her boudoir. But then, she reflected, the trip might help her to divert her thoughts. She went out little enough. The change might do her good. So she said:

"Very well, I'll go."

"All right, dear, I'll call for you in my carriage and we'll drive together to the station. Be ready at 8.30. By the by, where's Mr. Marshall?"

"At his club."

"Really?" she said, elevating her eyebrows, "I don't see how you stand it. I couldn't. I'd divorce Mr. Dexter if he was away half as much. Well, goodby, dear. I'll see you to-morrow morning at 8.30."

That evening Eunice dined alone. Roy had said he would return for dinner, but at seven o'clock he telephoned he would stay at the club. So Eunice sat down at her table in solitary state, waited upon with much ceremony by two gorgeously attired servants. She did not care for all this style, but Roy had insisted upon it, and she had acquiesced.

After dinner, she went up to the nursery to see Grace and, finding the child asleep, she kissed her and went downstairs into the library, intending to read a little before going to bed. This was how she passed her evenings, alone, night after night. She had been there about half an hour when the butler came up with a card. She took it and read:

"Mr. Leonard Harvey." Scribbled in a corner were these words: "May I see you for a few moments? L. H."

Eunice thought it strange that Mr. Harvey should call at this hour. He must have seen Roy at the club, and know that he had not come home. Then she grew alarmed. Perhaps there had been an accident.

"Show Mr. Harvey up at once," she said.

She waited with nervous dread and advanced quickly when Harvey entered. He was in evening dress and handsome as ever. His face was a shade paler than usual and his manner seemed nervous. In the buttonhole of his coat was a fresh orchid.

"You hardly expected to see me," he began hesitatingly.

"Hardly," she admitted. Then apprehensively, she added: "I hope nothing's wrong!"

"No-nothing," he replied.

But his manner was so strained and peculiar that Eunice was genuinely alarmed.

"Has anything happened to Roy?" she said quickly. "Don't keep me in suspense, please."

Harvey sank uninvited on a luxurious divan and pulled nervously at his white kid gloves.

"Don't worry," he replied with a cynical laugh, "your husband's all right. When I left the club he was \$1,000 out in a \$20 limit poker game."

Eunice breathed more freely. Then she wondered what had brought her visitor. She sat opposite him, saying nothing, and there followed a long and embarrassing silence. Eunice began to feel uncomfortable.

Without looking up at him she felt that his eyes were fixed on hers. Finally he broke the silence by saying abruptly:

"Do you know, Mrs. Marshall, I begin to think Roy's a good deal of a fool. In fact, I've thought so for some time."

"What do you mean?" she demanded, not comprehending.

Harvey leaned forward, his ardent eyes flashing.

"He's a fool to sit playing cards at the club when he has such a wife as you at home."

He drew back in the shadow cast by the reading lamp and watched her keenly to judge of the effect of his words. But there was nothing in Eunice's face to show that she had fathomed his meaning. Yet she had understood. It was plain enough. This man, this modern Judas in evening clothes, was trying to vilify his friend behind his back, endeavoring to profit by his absence to supplant him in the affections of his wife.

There was a touch of irony in her reply which did not escape him as she said:

"You surely did not come here to-night expressly to pay me a commonplace compliment."

Harvey was puzzled. He did not quite know how to take her. Notwithstanding his long and varied experience with all kinds of women—and his friends declared him to be a past master in dealing with

the most difficult of them—this quiet woman with the tranquil gray eyes and calm, aristocratic manner, was more baffling and elusive than any one he had ever encountered. Yet the colder she was, the more difficult she made the game, the more eager he was to win. Ignoring the last remark, he tried to arouse her sympathy.

"A man does not know when he is well off," he went on. "Take my case for example. If in early life I had met and married such a woman as you I am convinced I should be to-day a happier and better man than I am. Do you suppose I really take pleasure in this reckless, irresponsible bachelor life I lead? Do you suppose I care a straw for the men, the women I associate with? No, I was tired of it all long ago, and yet each year it is the same as ever—the same fast companions, the same weak foolish women, the same follies, the same regrets! Don't you suppose that I realize what the love of one good woman means—such a woman, for instance, as yourself?"

It was with difficulty that Eunice restrained her impatience. She saw the necessity of immediately ending this interview which placed her in an extremely false position. Rising from her seat and with as much self-possession as she was able to command, she said frigidly:

"Really, Mr. Harvey, I don't see why you address

yourself to me. I have nothing to do with your personal affairs."

He rose from the divan and advanced toward her, his voice trembling with the passion he ill concealed.

"I come to you," he said, his eyes ardently seeking hers, "because I cannot keep away. I had to tell you this. Before you came to Pittsburg I knew no life other than the one I led. But when I saw how happy you and Roy were together at Glendale, even in your days of poverty, then for the first time I knew that my own life was a failure. All these years, unknown to you, I have worshipped you from afar as the ideal, the woman with a soul. Gradually you entered into all my thoughts, and then I knew that I loved you. But you never suspected it and if Roy had continued to treat you as he should treat a faithful woman, you would never have heard it from me. But since he's had money your husband is a changed man—the wild life he is leading, his neglect of you. is the topic of public gossip everywhere. Believe me. I feel sorry for you. I have read your grief in your beautiful eyes. I come here because I want you to let me be your friend."

He extended his hand. Eunice took no notice of it and drew back, her face pale.

"Mr. Harvey, every word you address to me in this manner in the absence of my husband is an insult! I need neither your sympathy nor your friend-

ship. In any case you are a disloyal friend, for you are treacherous to Roy, who unwisely confides in you. If my husband is to-day a different man from what he used to be, who is responsible but you? You are the one who led him into a life he knew nothing of—a life he had little taste for. And now you have done your best to ruin him, you turn your attention to his wife. You are wasting your time, Mr. Harvey. You have made a mistake. I am not the kind of woman you take me for. And now please excuse me. Roy may be home any minute and I don't suppose," she added with contempt, "that you would care to have him find you here!"

She turned her back on him, hoping that he would go, but he still stood there, staring at her.

"I hardly think he would be jealous," he said with a cynical smile. "He's too much infatuated elsewhere. You've been blind all this time. He's false to you."

In an instant Eunice was confronting him, her hands clenched, her eyes flashing:

"How dare you? How dare you?" she cried. "My husband may prefer his club to his home, his business affairs may prevent him from giving me as much of his company as he did formerly, but he is too much of a man to be deliberately false to me. When you insinuate that he is deceiving me with another woman you lie. It is the act of a coward. I

do not believe it! I do not believe it! And now go! Go! If you don't go I'll call the servants and have them put you out!"

She sank on a sofa, exhausted by the vehemence of her outburst, her bosom heaving with indignation and outraged dignity. Harvey watched her for a moment, then with a shrug of his shoulders he picked up his gloves and slowly left the room.

Long after he was gone Eunice still sat there, weeping silently, her form bent as if under the weight of a crushing blow.

"Could it be true?" she murmured between her sobs; "was it possible that a still greater grief awaited her? Was there another woman?"

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CHAPTER VI

EMBRANDT HALL was always a busy place no matter at what hour of the day or night. A string of private carriages, hansoms or automobiles was almost constantly stationed before the door, the drivers patiently awaiting their owners -society women who had come for twenty-minute sittings to this or that portraitist, newspaper men interviewing an operatic celebrity, a publisher negotiating for a new novel with a fashionable author, a physician making a professional call. Only those visitors who drove up in carriages received consideration from the haughty uniformed attendant on service; all others were eved with suspicion and frequently peremptorily halted-often not without reason, for usually they proved to be models seeking employment, ingenious process servers, audacious book canvassers or dunning tradesmen.

It was a few minutes after 10 A. M., an hour when, according to the hall boy's notions of social propriety, all well-bred people should still be abed, when a smart equipage drew up at the curb and the footman, jumping down, assisted two ladies to alight. One was Mrs. Dexter and the other Eunice.

"Is Miss Gordon in?" demanded Mrs. Dexter of the attendant, who, impressed with the quality of the callers, touched his hat respectfully.

"No, m'm, she's out horseback riding. She won't be back till one o'clock."

"How provoking," exclaimed Mrs. Dexter, turning to Eunice. "We must catch the three o'clock back home, and I did so want you to see that boudoir."

The two women had been in New York since the day before, and having completed their shopping, Mrs. Dexter had insisted on this visit to the Gordon studio.

"Never mind," said Eunice, just as glad to get out of it, "we'll come some other time that we are in New York."

But Mrs. Dexter was not to be put off so easily. Once her mind was set on anything she persisted until she got what she wanted. To the attendant she said:

"I told Miss Gordon I was coming to-day to look at her studio. She expects us."

Scenting a possible tip, the boy replied politely:

"Her man Achmet is upstairs. If you go up, m'm, no doubt he will show you the place."

Mrs. Dexter dragged the unwilling Eunice after her and shooting up in the elevator, they soon found themselves on the æsthetically draped landing facing Cleo Gordon's door.

The dark-skinned Achmet, his eyes rolling, his white teeth glistening, opened the door in answer to the touch on the electric button. He made a profound salaam on seeing the ladies, his hands folded across his chest, his turbaned head almost knocking the floor.

He knew Mrs. Dexter by sight. His mistress had not expected her so soon and was taking exercise in the park, but if the ladies would do him the honor to step in he was sure Mme. Gordon would be much pleased.

Thus invited they passed in. Eunice was delighted with everything. Accustomed as she was at Altonia to be surrounded by every luxury that money could buy, she felt there was something more here than a mere lavish expenditure of dollars. It needed the expert hand of the connoisseur to create these artistic effects, to produce the beauty and harmony of these color schemes. One recognized at once that it was not a mere jumble of exotic curios, but that each object had its peculiar value and association, and had been selected and cherished by its owner because of some special appeal it had made to her artistic sense. The air was heavy with subtle and unfamiliar perfumes; there was a suggestion of voluptuousness in every corner. One felt all around the sensuous attraction to the eye.

[&]quot;Isn't it artistic?" said Mrs. Dexter.

[&]quot;Beautiful!" murmured Eunice. Then pointing to the stairway that led to the balcony she asked: "Where do those stairs go to?"

"The boudoir is up there. Come with me."

In spite of her forty years, Mrs. Dexter ran nimbly up the stairs, followed more slowly by Eunice, who lingered to look at each object as she went along, the fine tapestries, the oil paintings, the rare objets d'art, while Achmet stood watching her, rolling his almond-shaped eyes.

"Come, Eunice!" cried Mrs. Dexter from above. "This is the boudoir. Isn't it exquisite?"

Eunice entered a room daintily draped in pink rose, the rest of the decorations being in white and gold, with hand-painted panels showing Cupid pursuing Psyche. On the ceiling was a magnificent allegorical painting depicting the birth of Venus. The room was elegantly furnished with every luxury dear to the feminine heart. The Louis XV furniture and carpets were in keeping with the general color effects and on a large dresser with an immense mirror shone a toilette set of solid gold.

"Did you ever see anything like it?" ejaculated Mrs. Dexter enthusiastically.

"No, it is really beautiful," rejoined Eunice, passing here and there, inspecting everything.

Mrs. Dexter was at one end of the room going into raptures over a beautiful ormolu writing desk when suddenly Eunice gave a cry. Looking quickly up, she saw Eunice staggering as if about to fall. She rushed to her, alarmed.

- "What is it, dear? Are you ill?"
- "No—only a little faint, that's all! I've not been feeling well lately. If you could get me a glass of water, I shall be all right."
- "Certainly, dear, certainly. I'll go and get some at once. Just sit quiet till I come back."

When she had left the room Eunice took from her bosom an object which she had hastily concealed, and which she had found on the dresser. It was a pen sketch of Roy Marshall, and under it was written:

"To lovely Cleo Gordon—the most fascinating woman in the world—the everlasting homage of Roy Marshall."

She had come across it by accident while looking at the many curios and beautiful articles de luxe displayed on the dressing-table. No one could possibly mistake it for any one but Roy. The portrait was a speaking one.

"So Mr. Harvey was right, after all," she murmured to herself when she had recovered from her first surprise. "It is true then that there is another woman. This is the woman."

A lump rose in her throat, the blood seemed to freeze in her veins. She was surprised that she did not really faint or cry out. Her asking for water was merely a subterfuge to get Mrs. Dexter out of the way until she had time to think what to do. Her first impulse was to tear up the portrait and to scatter the pieces

over the floor so this woman might understand it was the work of an outraged wife. Then she thought she would take the portrait away with her so as to be able to confront Roy with it. He could not deny such overwhelming proof as that. But as she grew calmer, she became more collected and more sensible. She asked herself wearily what was the use. They did those things only in books and on the stage. In real life people were more practical. Heroics would do no good. If she confronted Roy and charged him with being false to her, would that make him love her again if all love for her were dead in his heart?

No, their love was buried forever, without hope of resurrection, that was very certain. She could never win him back. Things had gone too far. The breach was irreparable. Henceforth she must live her life alone, and now, for the first time, her trembling lips gave form to the dread word which for weeks had been hovering in her thoughts-divorce! That was the only way. There could be no compromise in a relation so intimate and sacred. She owed it to her own self-respect. How long the intimacy with this artist had been going on she did not know, but Roy himself had been steadily drifting away from her ever since the money came. While he was engaged in fighting the battle of life she had been a good enough wife for him, he had been glad to have her share with him all his trials, his disappointments, sorrows, but now

he had conquered, now he was at the top of the ladder flushed with success, she was not good enough. Another woman more closely in touch with the gayer side of life, was a more congenial companion. No, she would leave the portrait where it belonged. It was not hers. It was the property of the other woman. She herself had no interest in it.

Hearing Mrs. Dexter's footsteps returning, she quickly replaced the sketch on the dresser, and resumed her seat on the chair. An instant later Mrs. Dexter entered with the glass of water.

"Well, dear," she said solicitously, "how do you feel now?"

"I'm much better," said Eunice, rising. "It was a little dizziness, that's all. Hadn't we better go? The air will do me good."

"Certainly, dear, certainly. We'll go right home." They started back to Pittsburg that same afternoon. All the way in the train Mrs. Dexter chattered about the shopping they had done and the social activities which awaited her on arrival home. She did all the talking, Eunice replying only in monosyllables, and although Mrs. Dexter noticed that her companion was quieter and more preoccupied than usual, she attributed it to the fatigue of the trip. She had not the slightest suspicion that she was participating in a life tragedy or that their innocent visit to the studio

that morning was likely to be followed by the gravest consequences.

It was only when she reached Altonia and could seclude herself in the privacy of her own apartments that Eunice was able to gauge the extent of the misfortune which had befallen her. At first when she locked the door of her room and felt herself secure from inquisitive eyes, she broke down completely, bursting into a fit of passionate weeping, moaning and crying as though her heart were broken, her entire body shaken by convulsive sobs. Then, as she became calmer, she considered how she could cope with this new and serious situation. She could no longer weakly allow things to drift as they had done.

Her own dignity and the good name of her daughter demanded that she be set right before the world. What she had dreaded but had hoped to avert had happened. Roy was not only cold, indifferent, neglectful. He was unfaithful to her. He loved another woman. Wilfully, deliberately he had severed the last link that bound them together. Their courtship, their many years of happy married life, the sorrows they had shared together—all that was now but a cherished memory. Too proud to accept a division, henceforth, she said to herself, they could be nothing to each other. To continue to live together under these conditions was repugnant to a woman of her acute sensibility. Therefore only divorce remained. Certainly she

would insist upon divorce. No suggestion of a separation, no offer of a handsome settlement should tempt her to waver in her decision to seek complete liberty and vindication in the courts from a man who cast her aside simply because he had grown tired of her. She did not want his charity and would accept nothing from him. The money he had already settled upon her would suffice to live on modestly and to educate her daughter. They would go away to some other State and living amid new scenes, try to forget.

Blinding tears of self-pity filled her eyes and rolled down her wan cheeks as she rebelled against the cruel injustice of it. She remembered Roy's ardent words that afternoon in the schoolhouse in Boston when he clasped her to his heart vowing to cherish and love her "for richer for poorer." How had he kept that vow? She thought how she had eagerly watched his advancement in his career, how she had prayed for his success, how she used to look forward to the evenings when, tired after the long day's work, he would hurry home to her and baby. What had she done to forfeit that happiness? Was it credible that a man would heartlessly throw aside a companion who had been faithful to him for fifteen long years? Perhaps he wished her dead and would not care if he never saw her again. A fresh paroxysm of weeping followed this suggestion, a feeling of utter hopelessness and desolation came over her, and, bent low in the chair, her form was bowed and crushed like that of one who had lost everything in life worth living for. If Roy saw her thus, she thought, with her red eyes and tear-stained face, he would feel sorry for her and perhaps abandon the life he was leading and come back to her. Then her eyes fell upon a portrait of her child. She picked it up and raised it to her lips.

"Thank God," she murmured, "my child still remains to me. If my husband deserts me I still have my little girl. Henceforth my life shall be devoted to making her grow up a good woman!"

The first thing to be done was to come to a definite understanding with Roy. However unpleasant such an interview with her husband would be, there must be no further delay in acquainting him with her irrevocable decision to seek a divorce. She was willing to spare him all the inconvenience and annovance possible, but absolute freedom must be restored to her. Not that she had the slightest wish to ever marry again. Such an idea never entered her mind, and if it had, would have been dismissed instantly as absurd. But she insisted on the legal bonds between them being completely severed and only divorce could do that. Otherwise, there need be no useless reproaches, no violent or hysterical scenes, no bitter recriminations. They had ceased to care for each other—that was all. Each would go his and her different way.

The first opportunity came about a week after her

discovery of the sketch in the Gordon studio. Roy was trying to live down the unpleasant notoriety of the Harvey dinner by paying more attention to business and avoiding temporarily, at least, his usual haunts and companions. Mr. Armstrong had plainly shown his annoyance. Such a scandal, he said, was most injurious to the interests of the Steel Company, weakening as it did the confidence of the investing public, and he hoped that there would be no repetition of it. This reprimand had the salutary effect of subduing the vice-president for a time, and as a consequence he spent more time at home.

One evening after a dinner passed in the customary constrained and painfully silent manner, Roy went into the library to read the evening papers. Eunice felt that the time had come to speak. Her heart beating wildly, her face pale, biting her lips to control her nerves but outwardly calm and self-possessed, she followed him there. It was so unusual for her to do anything of the kind that Roy looked up at her in amazement.

[&]quot;Roy," she faltered, "I want to talk to you."

[&]quot;Talk to me—certainly. Sit down," he stammered, not knowing exactly what to say, as if she were a neighbor making an unceremonious call. Yet he began to feel uncomfortable. Instinct told him, as the mariner at sea, that there were squalls ahead.

[&]quot;Roy," she said in a low voice a ing into a

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chair some little distance from him. "This cannot go on."

"What cannot go on?" he said uneasily.

"We cannot go on living together in this way. Something must be done."

He understood. His face flushed and he looked annoyed, as if the subject were one which he would prefer to let rest.

"What do you mean?" he demanded. "I don't follow you."

"Must I speak more plainly?" she said, raising her voice slightly. "I mean that there is no longer any reason why we should continue to live together. I mean that since you have ceased to care for me, my continued presence under this roof is only an additional indignity to those to which I am subjected daily. You cannot deny that your feelings toward me have changed entirely. Your every action shows it. My own heart convinced me of it long ago. I have no reproaches to make for your indifference, your neglect. You no longer love me—you have shown it very plainly. You have been quite frank about it; there has been no concealment, no misunderstanding. I, for my part, will be equally frank. I can no longer respect you. I cannot go on living with you."

He listened with growing impatience, his face flushing and growing pale in turns as he puffed nervously at his cigar. When she paused he blurted out:

"Yes, we might as well have it out now as any other time. If you had not brought the question up, I should have done so to-morrow or the next day. Frankly, Eunice, I am unhappy with you, and the sooner we part the better. We may as well be candid with each other."

The tears welled up in her eyes at this brutal speech, in spite of her efforts to retain control of herself.

"Unhappy with me!" she said gently. "Why are you unhappy with me?"

He tossed the newspaper aside and rose to his feet defiantly:

"Because you persistently interfere with my way of living. Don't imagine that all the wrongs are on my side. We don't get along as well as we used to because you are unreasonable. You don't like my friends, you resent my being away from home. You think you're badly treated and pose as a martyr. Do you suppose a man likes to come home and get nothing but cold looks and chilly receptions?"

She looked at him a moment in silence, trying to read his heart, and there was more sorrow than anger in her voice as she replied:

"Did you always complain of cold looks and chilly receptions, Roy?"

He said nothing, maintaining a surly silence. She advanced nearer to him, her sensitive mouth trembling at the corners. For a moment her pride struggled with her outraged dignity as a wife. She longed to throw her arms round his neck and plead with him. After all, she thought to herself, why not make one last appeal? Perhaps she might yet have some influence over him.

"Roy," she said, wistfully, with a note of infinite pathos in her voice, "don't let us be bad friends, let us stop and consider well before we speak the word that will wreck both our lives. Have you entirely forgotten how happy we were in the Glendale days?"

He shrugged his shoulders and said peevishly:

"You always talk of Glendale! In those days we did not live. We merely existed. If you were sensible you would understand that when a man has made such a success as I have he likes to enjoy his money, and there are places more exhilarating than the family circle. But you've never been able to understand it, and that's why we are always at loggerheads."

"I only understand," rejoined Eunice, with quiet dignity, "that the woman who was good enough for you in your years of poverty, is no longer the companion you want in your hour of success. I can blame myself for nothing. In all these years I've always done my duty to you as a wife. I humbled myself just now in making to you a last appeal. You refuse to listen. You are willing that we should part. So be it. I don't blame you. I say nothing. Only I want to be freed from you without further delay."

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- "What do you mean, what do you propose, a separation?" he asked quickly, his eye brightening.
 - "No," said Eunice calmly, "divorce!"
- "Divorce?" he echoed, "you must be insane. Divorce? Think of the publicity—the scandal!"
- "That is not my fault," she said quietly. "If you have rights I have rights too. I shall insist upon divorce."

He laughed carelessly.

"You don't know what you are talking about. You cannot get a divorce without cause. There is no cause."

She looked at him unflinchingly.

"You are mistaken," she said. "There are two causes, but one will be enough."

He gave her a quick, searching look, as though trying to read her mind.

"Nonsense, divorce is impossible. The notoriety will hurt me. I will agree to a separation and I will give you a million."

Her eyes had an expression in them that made his wince.

"A million!" she cried, contemptuously, "ah—you think that with money you can do anything, right any wrong, stifle all qualms of conscience! I do not want your money. I refuse to take it, absolutely! I should consider myself dishonored if I touched a single cent. The sum you settled on me in the days

when you still loved me—yes—that I will keep. It will be enough to live on and to educate my child. Your money, Roy, has been your ruin. It has made you selfish, heartless, cruel, unscrupulous. You were a good man, a good husband, a good father before your fortune spoiled you. Riches are sometimes a curse. They have proved so in your case. I want none of your money. I insist only on my complete freedom."

Roy quailed beneath her scornful indignation. Then his temper getting the upper hand, he strode angrily up and down the room. Suddenly turning, he brought his fist violently down on the table and cried:

"What's the use of wasting time talking all this infernal nonsense? Am I a boy to be lectured at by an hysterical woman? These scenes annoy me exceedingly and I won't put up with them. If it is your wish to drive me altogether from the house, you are succeeding admirably. A separation if you will, but a divorce is out of the question. I will never consent!"

She stood confronting him, her pale quivering face as determined and unyielding as his own. It was almost impossible to believe that this man and this woman, now facing each other as enemies, had once been everything in the world to each other.

"You must consent," she retorted. "Don't drive

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me to extreme measures. The law frees the woman who is deceived by her husband."

- "What do you mean?" he almost shouted. "You talk at random."
 - "I have evidence."
 - "What evidence?"
- "The evidence of the Rembrandt studio—I need go no further."

Roy staggered back thunderstruck. For a moment he was unable to speak from sheer astonishment. He had never dreamed that his wife was even aware of his acquaintance with Cleo Gordon.

- "Don't think," she went on. "that I'm going to make you any further reproaches. The discovery that my husband was false as well as a deserter added nothing to my misery. My heart could not break twice."
- "You do me an injustice!" he cried. "There is no ground for what you infer."
- "That will be for a jury to decide," she answered coldly. "But I have no wish to cause you unnecessary annoyance. A divorce on the ground of desertion is all I ask."
- "Very well," he said surlily. "You can have your own way. Arrange matters with your lawyers. I will not attempt to defend the suit."

She turned to go and he made no attempt to stop her.

She realized that this might be the last they would be together and a choking sensation seized her throat. She lingered a moment, half hoping that he might yet make some move, betray some sign that he felt regret for the tragedy that was parting them, but he picked up his newspaper unconcernedly and went on reading. Gulping down a sob, she left the room.



CHAPTER VII

for ostentatious display or greed for a succulent dinner, is dearer to the heart of our moneyed plutocracy than a new and sensational bit of scandal. To the members of the rich idle class, the wrecking of time-honored reputations, the besmirching of names once spotless, is the very breath of life. When, as sometimes happens, the social muck rake is nonproductive and the stimulant furnished by its highly flavored details is lacking, one is immediately made aware that something is wrong. Society is bored. The conversations in polite circles languish, the fashionables of both sexes have difficulty in stifling their yawns, everyone agrees that the season is particularly dull.

But Pittsburg's 400 sat up with an electric start when it first heard of the Marshall divorce suit, and for a few days it furnished spicy material for the social tittle-tattle of the town. Mrs. Dexter, of course, was the prolific source to which everyone hurried to learn all about the developments in the Marshall household, and she gave them all they wanted to hear. Funice, in her trouble, had naturally made a confi-

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dante of her most intimate woman friend, telling her frankly exactly how matters stood between herself and her husband, but making no mention of the discovery in the Rembrandt studio which had precipitated the crisis. The announcement that she intended to divorce Roy did not really surprise Mrs. Dexter any more than it did the rest of Pittsburg. It came as a shock to hear that Mrs. Marshall had actually begun a suit, although everyone has wondered for a long time why she had not taken action before. escapades, his wild manner of living, his neglect of his wife, had long been the subject of whispered comments in clubs and drawing rooms, and as usual in such an unequal conflict, sympathy had gone out to the wife, for with all its selfishness and worldliness. society sometimes shows it has a heart.

But all were mistaken in their estimate of this devoted wife who seemed willing to put up with every humiliation, every indignity, without protest or complaint. Like other wives who are compelled by force of circumstances to submit to the tyranny and treachery of their legal lords, it was thought she would endure it and say nothing. She was not given credit for so much spirit. The public press, particularly, took her part, the newspapers not hesitating to censure Roy for admitting that he was tired, when in the full tide of success, of the woman who had been all in all to him in the days of adversity and trial. Even Mr. Armstrong

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and the other steel directors interested themselves in the matter, and, acting in conjunction with Mrs. Dexter and other personal friends, made great exertions to bring about a reconciliation before it was too late, but all to no purpose. Their kindly overtures were firmly declined by Eunice and angrily resented by Roy. He declared that he would not tolerate interference in his domestic affairs nor any criticism of his conduct. He and his wife did not get along, they were not happy, in a word they were incompatible and so they had agreed to separate. There was nothing more to be said and the preparations for the trial drew near.

Eunice, meantime, had placed her interests in the experienced hands of Richard Stetson, a lawyer of international reputation who had known her father, and he at once set in motion the machinery of the law. Proof against human emotions as most lawyers. by the very nature of their profession, must necessarily be, the peculiar circumstances of Eunice's case made a special appeal to his sympathies. The recital of her wrongs not only aroused his indignation as a man, but whetted his appetite as a speaker of unusual power. He saw in the impending trial an admirable opportunity for another of those brilliant rhetorical flights for which he was famous. What jury, comprising men made of flesh and blood, could hear unmoved such a pathetic story of cruel and unmerited wrong done a faithful and defenseless woman? Endowed with a splendid oratorical gift, Stetson held a record for never having failed to convince the jury that right was on his side, and directly his name was mentioned in the Marshall divorce case, no one doubted the outcome.

As Pennsylvania does not recognize desertion as adequate reason for divorce, it was necessary that the suit be brought elsewhere, so months before the date fixed for the trial Eunice left Altonia for good and took up her temporary residence in the western State which held out a promise of freedom from a yoke which had become unbearable.

She did not go unaccompanied. Mrs. Dexter, in spite of Eunice's protests that she needed no one and could take good care of herself, had insisted on being allowed to go along as a companion. The careless world of fashion had not succeeded in quite deadening the society matron's heart to the dictates of common humanity. She had learned to like and respect this young wife who had been of their set, yet never one of them, and she could not stand indifferently by and see Eunice climbing her Calvary without a woman friend to help and comfort her.

Eunice had written to her sister-in-law Grace, telling her of her intention to leave Roy, and asking if she would take charge of her little namesake until the trial was over and she, Eunice, could return. Grace replied that she was overwhelmed at the news, and

without knowing anything of the merits of the case, was convinced that her old friend and teacher had good cause for the serious step she was taking. She had written Roy, she said, expostulating with him and asking for his version of the quarrel, but had received no reply. She would be delighted, of course, to take entire charge of her niece.

Little Grace was still too young to understand what the preparations for her mother's journey meant. The child had never been particularly attracted towards her father, and when Eunice replied in the negative to her question as to whether papa was going with them, the knowledge that she might not see him for a long time did not seem to cause her much concern.

But it was different with Eunice. In spite of her stoicism and the cold, proud exterior she strove to keep up, her heart was breaking. It was only by the exertion of the greatest will power that she was able to go through the painful ordeal of shattering the ties of years. Each little treasured article in her room was associated in some way with Roy, and great tears rolled down her cheeks as one by one she wrapped them up and packed them in her trunks. Then, for hours, she sat reading old letters—letters Roy had written her at various times in New York and later in Glendale years before, full of ardent passion and pledges of undying affection. She read them over

and over again, unable to see the writing through the blinding tears, and when at last she laid them down, she reverently tied them up with a blue ribbon and placed them tenderly away—relics of an irrevocable past.

Roy had left Altonia some time before and kept away. A few days before she left for the West, Eunice received this letter from him:

"I hear you are about to leave Pittsburg—perhaps for ever. It is better, I think, that we don't meet again. It would do no good and might cause both of us pain. I regret this more than I can express in words. If I am to blame forgive me. I have not wronged you intentionally. We were happy once but times are changed. I am changed—I admit it. I made you unhappy because I was unhappy with you. Why should two lives be made miserable? You will live your life happily, I hope and trust. I will live mine wherever it may lead me to. Remember me always kindly if you can. My little daughter is safer in your hands than in mine—you will make her the good woman you are yourself. Good-by and God bless you!

This letter was harder to bear than anything else, and Eunice wept long and passionately over it. Then she kissed it and laid it away with her other treasures. A few days later she left Altonia for the West, accompanied by Mrs. Dexter.

CHAPTER VIII

HE rickety little court house had been besieged since early morning by a well-dressed mob of men and women, anxious to hear the testimony and catch a glimpse of the principals in the notorious Marshall divorce case. The prominence of the millionaire defendant and the overwhelming wave of sympathy which had swept towards his poor neglected wife from every part of the country had aroused the greatest public curiosity. The prurient minded hastened to secure good places in the hope that spicy details of Roy Marshall's alleged philandering would be forthcoming, but in this the sensation seekers were disappointed, for the suit was not to be contested, and therefore there would arise no necessity for cross-examination of witnesses.

Eunice arrived early in company with Mrs. Dexter and her special counsel Richard Stetson. She was also represented in court by another lawyer of the local bar. Seated near her counsel's table the plaintiff was the cynosure of all eyes. She was heavily veiled, but that did not entirely conceal her pale face and dejected appearance, which was quickly commented upon in audible whispers by all present. Murmurs of

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sympathy arose on all sides. One felt intuitively that this woman had come there, not to triumph over an adversary, but to weep over the ashes of an extinct affection.

Roy Marshall did not appear in court. At that moment he was in New York, amusing himself in his usual haunts. To him this trial was the merest legal formality. He had agreed to everything his wife's lawyers had demanded, so why should he inconvenience himself unnecessarily? His interests were fully looked after by counsel.

After the evidence was all in, Attorney Stetson rose to address the jury and a silence that was almost oppressive fell upon the court room. The veteran lawyer was in good form and his powerful resonant voice rang out with telling and dramatic effect.

In all the many years in which he had been practising law, he said, he had never encountered a case more pitiful or one having a better claim to men's sympathy than that now before the court. It was a story, he went on, of a faithful woman heartlessly cast aside by a husband merely because he was tired of her, as one discards an old coat which has outlived its usefulness. The suit was almost unparalleled for the interest it had aroused all over the country, and this interest was no less due to the social prominence of the litigants than to the extraordinary circumstances connected with the case. Briefly, he reviewed the

married life of the Marshalls. Roy Marshall, a college vouth, had been attracted to Eunice Vincent, who was his sister's paid companion. She discouraged his attentions because Marshall senior had planned a rich marriage for his son, and being a proud, high-spirited girl she was not willing to be charged with having alienated his affections. This point had an important bearing upon the present suit, as it showed that Eunice Vincent could at no time be reproached with having run after the young man for his money and position. But Roy Marshall persisted in his wooing, and finally convinced of his sincerity, she yielded and became his wife. The marriage proved a very happy one. young couple had no money, Roy having quarrelled with his father; but he was plucky and set to work to earn his own way in the world, and for twelve long years they led an existence of well-nigh idyllic happiness.

Yet there were plenty of thorns along with the roses. Those were the days before Roy Marshall had become the master of millions, when all he was earning was the meagre weekly stipend of the newspaper reporter, or later the wages of a humble steel worker in the employ of the Excelsior Company, and when he had to work hard in order to keep the wolf from the door. They were the dark days of uncertainty and discouragement, when he was never sure of his position from one day to another and saw always stalking be-

hind him the gaunt spectre of poverty and hunger. Yet even in his most critical moments, even when the future seemed hopeless, when everything had failed, when he feared he was incapable of earning a dollar and was faced with the humiliating alternative of going back to his father and admitting defeat, Roy Marshall never lost heart. Why? Because he had always by his side a valiant young wife whose cheerful disposition had buoyed him up and never allowed him to despond, who cheered him when he was most disheartened and spurred him on to renewed effort when every resource seemed to have been exhausted.

Eunice Marshall had been the shining light, the guiding star, in Roy Marshall's life. She it was who led him on from where he started to the lofty position in the nation's industry which he occupied to-day. When, disgusted with the newspaper business, he went to Pittsburg in the hope of gaining a foothold in the steel trade, his faithful wife went with him, sharing with him the early inconveniences, the anxieties, the actual privations. She it was who made for him the modest little home at Glendale, where he spent what were probably the happiest years of his life. was born their first child, an event which brought the young parents even closer together. Throughout this period, Roy Marshall revealed his best qualities. Highly successful in his trade, rapidly regaining the respect and confidence of his employers, he showed

himself in the domestic circle a model husband and father, never contented anywhere but at home, devoted to his wife to whom he acknowledged he owed everything. At this moment of their happiness a great sorrow came into their lives. Their little baby was stricken with scarlet fever and died. In this terrible hour of a common sorrow, giving each other such mutual consolation as they could, the tears of the distracted parents mingled as they fell upon the coffin of their child!

The attorney paused in his speech like the actor in a drama when he reaches a particularly dramatic situation. One might have heard a pin drop in the court room, so tense was the attitude of the spectators. Bent eagerly forward, they seemed unwilling to lose a single word. Suddenly, the deep silence was broken by a sob that came from the corner where Eunice was seated. The plaintiff was seen to bend down and bury her face in her handkerchief. Mrs. Dexter and others near by, moved over to her, fearing she was about to faint, and some of the spectators, becoming excited, The judge impatiently started from their seats. rapped for order and announced that anyone making the slightest disturbance would be expelled from the court room. Mr. Stetson glanced anxiously at his client, but on being assured by Mrs. Dexter that it was nothing more serious than an excess of emotion, he proceeded.

If he had entered thus fully into the domestic affairs of the Marshalls, he said, it was because he wished to impress upon the jury that until within the last few years the Marshalls' home had been an ideal one. Previously there had been no bickerings, no misunderstandings, no misconduct on either side. It seemed that never had a pair been better mated. He wished to lay particular stress upon the fact that at no period in their married life had Roy Marshall reason to complain of his wife. Her conduct had always been irreproachable. She had ever been the good mother, the faithful wife. She had always done her duty and more than her duty.

The couple, he went on, would have continued to live happily together and there never would have been any talk of divorce, but for a misfortune which altered Roy Marshall's character and changed the whole trend of his life. After years of comparative poverty he suddenly became enormously rich. He found himself the possessor of many millions. To most men, this good fortune would have come as the reward of effort, they would have rejoiced to share it with the companion who had so patiently borne the trials and sufferings of the many weary years of waiting. But not so with Roy Marshall. Great prosperity only brought unhappiness into his home, and broke the heart of the faithful wife who had long prayed for his success. The master of vast wealth, Roy Marshall

was seized with the money passion. He was no longer contented with the wholesome placid joys of the domestic circle. The great gay world without allured him and he could not resist its call. Instead of taking pleasure in his wife's company as before, he found her society dull and commonplace. He started out to make new friends, fond of a gayer life, and it was not long before his club saw him more frequently than his home.

For months his wife suffered in silence and uncomplainingly. She did everything in her power to make her home attractive and win her husband back. his sake she entertained people she did not like and whom she could hardly respect. She suffered slights and humiliations innumerable—all without a murmur. Instead of mending, matters went from bad to worse and gradually it dawned upon Eunice Marshall that the love of her husband was dead to her forever. The situation became unbearable. Her own self-respect demanded that she should come to an understanding. They had a painful interview in which he informed his wife frankly that he had ceased to care for her, and that it was his intention to leave her and live his life apart from her. Then it was that she decided to petition this court for divorce.

"Those, gentlemen of the jury, are the facts in as cruel and heartless a desertion of a blameless wife as was ever known in the annals of our divorce courts.

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The Constitution of the United States has given this woman certain well-defined and unalienable rights, but the unwritten laws of humanity and justice shield her with even more protection and sympathy. She claims the rights to be freed absolutely and forever from this man who has wronged her and to be permitted to go forth from this courtroom her head erect, liberated from the shackles that have become degrading to her womanhood, free to go where she elects and live out her own life with her child. Gentlemen of the jury, this plaintiff places her case in your hands!"

Mr. Stetson sat down, having spoken for nearly He had made an impression, not only on an hour. the spectators, who, mostly women, were the kind of auditors to whom a case of this kind would especially appeal, but also on the hard-faced men in the jury box. One juryman had a suspicious redness round his eyes, while another blew his nose loudly. All looked stern and determined. The spectators audibly expressed their approval of the attorney's stinging denunciation and at one end of the room someone raised a cheer, an outburst of enthusiasm which was quickly squelched by the judge, who pounded vigorously for silence. A crowd gathered round the counsel's table. everybody seeking to shake hands with Mr. Stetson, while Eunice and Mrs. Dexter remained quietly in their seats. After the judge had made his charge,

which was considered to be distinctly favorable to Mrs. Marshall, the jury retired.

In less than five minutes they reappeared. Their faces told plainly what their verdict was. Mrs. Dexter nudged Eunice.

"It's victory, Eunice!" she whispered, thinking to encourage her.

Eunice shook her head.

"No-not a victory!" she said sadly.

After the judge had put the usual question the foreman replied:

"We find in favor of the plaintiff, and award her the custody of her daughter."

Mr. Stetson sprang to his feet, a look of triumph on his face.

"Gentlemen of the jury," he cried, "the plaintiff wishes to express her gratitude for the just verdict you have rendered. It is a signal victory for the cause of right and justice, but it brings no joy to the poor woman it sets free. As the Duke of Wellington wrote to his government after his victory at Waterloo: 'Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.' We have no desire to cheer over our triumph. Your verdict will not give back to my client the happiness she has lost. Henceforth, her life——"

His closing sentence was interrupted by the sound of loud sobbing. Eunice had given way and, leaning

against Mrs. Dexter's bosom, was weeping bitterly. She had kept up bravely all through the trial and until the jury brought in their verdict. Then when she realized that this was really the end, that the law had now severed forever the ties that bound her to Roy, that the husband she had loved and still loved was gone from her forever, it was more than she could bear. The sound of her weeping dominated every other noise in the court room.

At that same moment, hundreds of miles away, a man was reclining on luxurious cushions in a studio in Rembrandt Hall, New York, listening dreamily to the dulcet notes of a mandolin to whose accompaniment a woman was singing softly a Spanish love song. Her fresh soprano voice, vibrating with youth and passion, filled the studio with caressing tones, while from overhead the rapidly fading light of the late afternoon touched her glorious hair with glints of burnished gold.

Only once before had Roy seen her look so beautiful. That was the day he had tried to kiss her and she had escaped upstairs and mocked him from the balcony. Had she a heart, this woman, or was she only a coquette exercising her wiles to lure men to her feet merely for the pleasure it gave her to laugh

at their folly and weakness? He had known her now for nearly a year and yet, all the slanderous gossip of the world to the contrary notwithstanding, they were nothing to each other but good friends. Roy, exasperated by her teasing coquetry, had at times lost patience and become ardent, pressing, persistent, but each time she had put him in his place with the hauteur of a queen, only to laugh at him a moment later so as not to completely discourage him. Young in years, she was sophisticated enough in the ways of men to understand the immense power wielded by a woman who denies herself. Men, she knew well, are content to run after the shadow; obstacles only spur them to greater effort. She accepted his presents, she liked his company, she enraged her other men friends by snubbing them in Roy's favor, but beyond thatnothing! It was precisely the kind of treatment to keep a man of Roy's temperament enslaved. not long before he lived only on the smiles from her lips, the light from her eyes. Eunice, his clubs, business-all was forgotten. Then came his wife's revolt and demand for divorce. At first it was a shock to him and yet in a sense a relief. He had felt guilty of treason to a woman who, after all, had done him no wrong, and in a fashion he was still fond of Eunice. One cannot tear up in an hour a love that has grown out of fifteen years' constant comradeship and associa-He knew well that he was in the wrong, but he lacked the strength to resist the call of this new fascinating life that completely enthralled him, and rather than go on with these continual misunderstandings with Eunice, he had come to the conclusion himself that a separation was the only possible way out.

Yet as he sat there listening to Cleo Gordon, his mind could not help travelling westward, to the little city where at that moment he knew was being enacted the tragedy which was to make him a free man. What would he do with his liberty—marry this woman? His heart gave a tumultuous leap, only an instant later to be depressed with doubt. Would she have him—would she ever marry any one? He watched her moodily, until, glancing in his direction, she noted his grave air. Laying aside the mandolin, she leaned over toward the divan, her chin resting on her two hands supported by her knees.

- "Why are you so serious to-day?" she demanded.
- "I'm thinking of serious things," he replied.
- "Of what are you thinking?"
- "Of you!"
- "Of me-what are you thinking of me?"
- "I was wondering if you'd marry me if I get my divorce."

She burst into a merry peal of laughter.

- "Marry you! You call that serious? Oh, really you are a funny man!"
 - "There's nothing funny about that," retorted Roy



petulantly. "It's very serious to me. You ought to understand what I feel. I'm not trifling. Cleo, would you marry me if I get my divorce? The trial is over by this time. Any moment I expect to receive a telegram telling me the result. Would you marry me?"

He bent eagerly forward and tried to seize her hand. But she quickly withdrew it and, picking up the mandolin, began to play.

"I will answer your question," she said with an elusive smile, "when you are free—not before. I refuse to discuss such matters with a man who is still married."

At that moment Achmet entered the studio with something on a silver salver. Passing over to Roy, he said:

"A telegram, sir. Is there any answer?"

His face flushed, Roy hastily rose from the divan and snatching the yellow envelope, tore it open. Cleo watched the expression on his face with languid interest. Turning to Achmet, he said:

"No-no answer."

As the man retired, letting the heavy draperies fall behind him, Roy threw the telegram into Cleo's lap.

"There!" he cried, "read that. The divorce is granted! I am a free man! Now what is your answer?"

He bent eagerly over her. She perused the despatch and then calmly passed it back:



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"You are unreasonable," she said. "Such a thing is not decided off-hand. I will tell you to-morrow—manana, as the Spanish say." Then coaxingly, she added, with the smile he could never resist, "Come, be a good boy, sit down and I'll play for you."

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CHAPTER IX

N a private room of a suite of offices on the top floor of a Broadway skyscraper a man sat before a stock ticker, nervously handling the long serpent-like tape as it slowly unwound from the delicate mechanism and with sharp metallic clicks told its tragic story of Wall Street.

Every now and then a smothered exclamation of impatience escaped his compressed lips as he keenly watched the steady procession of cabalistic figures. The market was persistently going the wrong way. Great Western 88-873/4-871/2-86-853/4-851/4-84-833/4. Good God! A drop of five points in as many minutes, where would it stop?

He called his confidential clerk who was in the outer office. A bald-headed, middle-aged man wearing spectacles entered the room.

"Hutton," cried the financier, "h—ll has broken loose in the Street. Great Western has gone to pieces under a bear attack. A serious slump will hit us pretty hard. We must boost the stock up if it takes all the money I've got left. How do I stand?"

He looked anxiously at the clerk, who, like some passionless automatic machine, began to reckon:

"Your losses on Coppers yesterday were \$400,000

and on *Union Pacific* the day before \$700,000. Last week you dropped \$500,000 fighting the Jackson interests and you were \$800,000 to the bad in the Boston Gas deal. Altogether two millions four hundred thousand dollars on the debit side of the ledger in ten days. Your cash balance at the bank and bonds and stock immediately negotiable amount to about three millions."

"Three millions!" cried his employer bitterly.
"Three millions left of twenty millions! Well, what's the odds? The quicker it goes the better. I guess the money'll last as long as I do. It's the excitement of the game I like, not the money. Get my broker on the 'phone."

The clerk withdrew and the financier resumed his vigil at the tape. The ominous ticks continued: Great Western 83-82½-82½-81. He breathed hard and an anxious expression came over his pallid, attenuated face, which every now and then was distorted by a sudden spasm of pain. One thing was plain—his powerful adversaries in the street were doing their best to down him. It was war to the death this time. At that rate a million dollars would not cover his losses before the Exchange closed at three o'clock. Something must be done at once to check the slump. The telephone rang and he picked up the receiver.

"Hello, Mr. Seward, what's the matter with Great Western?"

"Nobody knows, Mr. Marshall. Some hostile interest is driving the stock down. We are on the verge of a stampede. What are your instructions?"

"Go on the floor and buy all you can at 83. No matter what it goes to—buy! buy! buy! The Harris crowd is behind this attack. They've sworn to corner me on that stock, but they don't know who they're fighting. Buy all the *Great Western* in sight. You can draw on me for three millions more if you need it to turn the market. I'd spend my last cent to beat those fellows."

Roy returned to the ticker. The slump continued. Great Western 82-81%-81½-81-80. Then as he watched, there suddenly came a change. The tide began to turn. The bear raid was checked, repulsed. The ticks told the story: Great Western 80¼-80½-80½-81½-81½-82-83. Prices were rallying. The worst was over. The power of the Marshall millions was making itself felt. His eyes eagerly watching the tape, Roy rubbed his hands exultingly and his face brightened perceptibly as he read and re-read the encouraging figures.

Wall Street and its fierce battles of dollars was about the only real interest that Roy Marshall had left in life. Amid the feverish excitement of the gold lust, when participating in the daily orgies of frenzied finance, he could still arouse some of his old-time enthusiasm. When engaged directing some big coup on

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which he stood to make or lose millions he still displayed the same masterful qualities which had put him, while still in his thirties, at the head of one of the most successful business organizations in the world. But outside of stock quotations everything palled on him. Like the victim of the morphine habit who soon discovers that the insidious drug has become a deadly necessity, so Roy found that he could not live without the constant stimulus of the money game.

Six years had passed since that afternoon when, in the studio in Rembrandt Hall, he received the news that Eunice had secured her divorce. He had never seen his wife since and as far as he was concerned she had passed out of his life forever. He received a letter from Mr. Stetson in relation to matters connected with the early money settlement, and the attorney informed him that Mrs. Marshall had gone to the South, which henceforth would be her home, and he added that any communication he, Roy, wished to make relative to his daughter or any other matter should be sent in his care.

After the first few days spent in futile regrets, Roy Marshall had started in to enjoy to the full the liberty he had so ardently desired. He gave extravagant entertainments at Altonia, assisted by Leonard Harvey and his other club cronies, and for months the splendid Pittsburg mansion, with all its costly furnishings and art treasures, was the scene of boisterous supper

parties, all-night poker sessions, gay proceedings behind drawn curtains, of every description. Roy plunged into the maelstrom of social gayety with an abandon that amazed everybody. The lights in Altonia were practically never extinguished. A long string of carriages stood at its gates day after day and long into the night. Some hinted that its master, in thus seeking strenuous distraction, was trying to drown the still small voice of conscience.

Cleo Gordon had been one of the most frequent and most privileged guests at Altonia. Still blindly infatuated, Roy had invited the artist to his home in the Machiavelian hope that the beauty of the place would appeal to her, and that if only lukewarmly attracted toward himself, she might be seized with But she soon let ambition to become its mistress. him know that he was wasting his time. A strange. impulsive, selfish creature without much heart or real feeling, she had no desire to surrender any part of her hard-earned independence. It was easier, as she put it, to love many than one. Her only interest in Roy had been that he was different from her other men friends, and it had amused and gratified her vanity to encourage his admiration. But directly his attentions became serious, she decided he was a bore, and did not hesitate to show it. She told him frankly that she liked the company of him and his friends, and it pleased her to visit his house, but all idea of a closer

relationship was out of the question, and she intimated plainly that if he wished them to remain friends he must not insist further. Thus snubbed, Roy took her at her word, and although they remained on good terms he gradually lost all interest in her, and little by little ceased his visits to Rembrandt Hall altogether.

For two years Roy Marshall went the pace which kills. There was nothing in the world that he craved for which his money did not furnish, there was no human emotion which it did not enable him to expe-He owned fast horses, racing automobiles, steam and sailing vachts. He gambled away fortunes at Monte Carlo and became a noted plunger in Wall Street. He was as well known on the various race tracks of the country and in New York's Tenderloin as on the streets of Pittsburg, and the newspapers of the country held him up as an awful example of the corruptive influence of great wealth. In less than twenty-four months he had squandered five millions of his fortune. But he soon tired of it. As soon as the novelty wore off, he became satiated and when he had drained the cup of pleasure to its dregs, he found that the after taste was bitter as gall.

When finally he sobered down he began to have a sense of isolation. He was lonely. His old friends deserted him and he made no new ones. While still eager in the mad pursuit of amusement, he had not lacked companions. The man with money always has

plenty of so-called friends willing to help him spend it. But when Harvey and the others saw that he was in earnest in his avowed intention to lead a less strenuous life, one by one they dropped him, until Roy soon found himself entirely outside their set. Pittsburg now having become distasteful, he decided to sell Altonia and take up his residence in New York, to which he was lured by the potent and irresistible attraction of Wall Street. He had resigned from the presidency of the Empire Steel Company some time before, after a plain hint from Mr. Armstrong that his retirement would be welcomed by the Board, and, unable to be idle, he determined henceforth to devote his attention to high finance. He soon showed the same genius for juggling with the stock ticker as he had for steel making and it was not long before he was recognized as one of the most powerful influences in the Street.

One evening a few months after his arrival in Manhattan he had dined alone at Delmonico's. It had been a heavy day, full of fierce strife and excitement, and when closing time came he was thoroughly played out. He felt dejected and depressed. There was a continual pain gnawing in the region of his heart and he felt miserable generally, having caught cold in the damp November weather. So on leaving the restaurant he went straight home to his house in Gramercy Park and sat in his room brooding over the fire. As he watched the leaping blue flames of the blazing

logs on the hearth, his memory began to travel backward and in his mind arose recollections of other days. Had it been worth while, after all? He had steeped himself in the pleasures of life, but he had found them hollow, unsatisfying. Pleasure. like the will o' the wisp, had danced tantalizingly before him. beckoning him to follow amid treacherous quicksands and dangerous pitfalls, but had always eluded him. Of society and its gayeties he had had enough. weary of it. In his mind he conjured up two pictures. One was called "The Pursuit of Pleasure." He saw a string of men and women, dressed in the height of fashion, holding each other by the hand singing and dancing round tables where sat other merry-makers who were eating and carousing, all careless of the morrow, none noticing the grinning skeleton sitting quietly at the feast. Then this picture faded away and another appeared in its place called "Domestic Peace." He saw a small and plainly furnished sitting room, and a man sitting at a table under a lamp busily engaged drawing mechanical plans. At the other side of the room there was a cradle, and near it sat knitting a young woman with a look of supreme contentment on her serene face. From time to time the mother would bend over the cradle and then she would turn and exchange a significant smile with her husband. In a corner an old Dutch clock ticked off the minutes

with solemn dignity. From the hearth one could hear the loud purring of a little black and white kitten.

Which picture had he chosen? Ah, he realized now that he had wrecked his life-not his alone, but hers. There lay the real and lasting happiness—in the sanctity and peace of the family circle, not in the empty glitter of fashion's world. But he had been too blind to see it. He had thrown away the substance for the shadow. Never again in this world would he know the happiness which had been his during those early years of his married life. That was gone foreverby his own choosing. He tried to dismiss the matter from his thoughts, to forget, to divert his mind with other things, but he could not. He had to admit to himself that he still loved Eunice, that he had never ceased to love her. Theirs had been the only true. imperishable love and nothing could kill it, not even his own heartless and brutal treatment. But it was no use regretting now, he could never repair the wrong he had done. He must bear the consequences of his folly and drag out his own miserable existence alone.

Time went by and gradually Roy Marshall disappeared altogether from the haunts of the smart set. He was seldom seen in public places at all, and on the few occasions when he did emerge from his retirement everyone commented on his changed appearance. His hair was now completely gray, his

face was furrowed with deep lines, his step had lost its elasticity. In ten weeks he seemed to have aged ten years. Those who saw him shook their heads, and declared that a secret chagrin was killing him.

As a matter of fact his health had been failing for months and his mental trouble aggravated his condition. One day in his office he was seized with a sudden faintness and severe pains in the chest.

"It's the heart," said the doctor after a careful examination. "You are working too hard. You have overtaxed your strength. You must take a rest."

"Rest!" echoed Roy mockingly. "There is no rest for me in heaven or hell! If I were to stop working now I should not live a week. It's only the continual excitement that keeps me going. Without it I should be like a punctured balloon."

The doctor shook his head.

"Your condition is more serious than you think. There is no use beating about the bush. It is my duty to warn you that you have developed heart trouble of the gravest character. The least excitement might prove fatal."

Roy laughed. He had no fear of death. What had he to live for? Death would be even welcome, for with it would come eternal oblivion and peace. His conscience would cease to torture him and he would be really at rest. So, instead of heeding the physician's advice he had plunged more madly than ever into

the whirling vortex of Wall Street, thrown this way and that on the tempest-tossed seas of frenzied finance, now completely engulfed under waves of disaster, now emerging from what had appeared a hopeless wreck.

To-day the enemy had resumed hostilities. The Harris clique had mercilessly attacked him at his most vulnerable point. They knew that he was heavily involved with *Great Western* and they were doing their best to force him to the wall. If their raid had succeeded and the stock had been driven below 78 he would have been wiped out. But thanks to his prompt action he had managed to turn the market and *Great Western* was again bullish.

He took up the tape once more, a triumphant smile of victory hovering round his lips. He had taught those fellows a lesson. Henceforth, they would know that he was no tyro to be trifled with. He would beat them at their own game and following up their tactics, inflict blow after blow from which they could never recover.

But as his eyes fell on the figures he started from his seat with a cry that brought his clerk running into the room.

Great Western 801/8-801/2-79-781/8.

"Great God!" cried Roy, his face turning ashen, "what does this mean? The price tumbling again in spite of Seward's efforts and my millions behind him! Quick, Hutton, get Seward on the 'phone!"

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The clerk vanished and Roy, his hand trembling with cold sweat running from every pore, stood over the ticker reading, with blanched face and every new tense, the story of his ruin. Slowly, deliberately, so if enjoying the mental agony of its victim, the soulless, remorseless machine ticked out:

Great Western 781/2-781/4-781/8-78-777/8.

"Ruin! ruin! ruin!" cried the financier in a peroxysm of distress. "I'm wiped out!"

The telephone bell rang furiously. Roy snatched up the receiver.

"Well, well, Seward, what's the matter?"

"Pandemonium has broken loose, Mr. Marshall! We were powerless to stem the tide. Your three millions are gone—ten millions would not have saved you. Several houses have suspended, all the other stocks are falling in sympathy. There's a panic on the floor of the Exchange."

Roy did not stop to hear any more. The telephone dropped out of his nerveless grasp, and he dropped heavily into a chair. He felt sick and dizzy.

"Hutton!" he cried.

The clerk ran hastily in.

Roy looked up at him, in a dazed kind of manner, one hand pressed over his heart.

"We're wiped out, Hutton," he gasped. "I'm ruined—completely ruined."

The clerk was alarmed at his appearance.



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"What's the matter, sir? Don't you feel well? You're white as a sheet."

"Get me a glass of water," answered Roy feebly, "I feel faint." Putting his hand to his chest, he added: "It hurts me here. You had better telephone for a cab. I—I'll go home."



CHAPTER X

FEW miles out from Richmond, on the main road from Fair Oaks to Virginia's historic capital, a picturesque three-story frame dwelling painted gray with red tiles, never failed to catch the eye of the chance passer by. It was not the importance of the house itself that attracted attention. for it was simple in architecture and unpretentious in appearance, suggesting neither affluence nor social prominence in its owners, but what especially distinguished it was the floral beauty in which the house and grounds were completely enveloped. back some hundred feet from the highway, from which it was practically screened by a well-trimmed box hedge, it had a large and carefully cultivated garden in front with well-stocked flower beds, while on either side and extending away in the rear, undulating green lawns stretched for a considerable distance. The place was appropriately named The Arbor and one surmised at once that it was the abode of a lover of Nature. There were flowers everywhere, of every hue and variety in season. Masses of clinging wistaria, red poppies, highly perfumed hyacinths, beauty roses, carnations, morning glories, acacias blossomed in every direction. The flowers crept up the sides of

the house and insinuating themselves round the woodwork, hung in graceful festoons over windows and porch, making of the place a blooming bower of particular charm and vernal loveliness, and impregnating the air in the immediate vicinity with a multitude of sweet scents.

A young girl of twelve was busy in the front garden industriously engaged raking the dead leaves of early fall which already littered the ground. She was bright and healthy-looking, with a frank, childish manner, and a mass of unbound hair which fell luxuriantly down to her waist. Her face was flushed from the exercise and every few moments she stopped in her work to laugh and wave her hand at the porch where a pair of loving eyes was watching her.

"There! That looks better already, doesn't it, mother?"

The child stopped to inspect one of the beds and gave a cry of delighted surprise.

"Oh mother, come and look. 'The morning glories are coming out splendidly. They'll all be in bloom for my garden party. Won't that be nice? I do love morning glories, don't you, mother?"

Eunice came down from the porch and joined her daughter, going with her from one flower bed to another, inspecting all their floral treasures with the trained eye of a connoisseur. The mother's arm was thrown lovingly round the child's neck.

"See, mother!" cried Grace enthusiastically, "look at these carnations. Aren't they exquisite?"

"They are all beautiful, dear," answered Eunice as she plucked a rose and inhaled its subtle perfume. "Flowers are Nature's poetry. They were created to compensate for the ugly, the sad things of life."

"How can anyone be sad, mother?" persisted Grace. "The world is so beautiful, the grass and the flowers smell so sweet!" Throwing her arms impulsively round Eunice's neck and kissing her she added: "I am happy as can be—you too are happy, aren't you, mother?"

A far-away thoughtful look came into Eunice's face and for a moment she was silent. Grace repeated her question:

"Aren't you happy too, mother?"

"Yes, dear," answered Eunice, caressing the child's long silky tresses fondly, "I have everything to make me happy, everything to be grateful for—an affectionate little daughter, a beautiful home, a tranquil, peaceful life. I should be ungrateful if I complained."

Six years of peace! As Eunice now looked back through the mist of years it was difficult to realize all she had passed through. It sometimes seemed to her impossible that she could have endured that mental agony, that heartbreaking anguish which finally terminated in the divorce court. For months after the jury gave her the verdict which freed her from

Roy Marshall she had been like one in a dream, taking no interest in passing events, her mind practically a The emotional breakdown in the courtroom had been followed by a complete nervous collapse and for some time her condition was so serious that her physicians entertained grave fears as to her recovery. One paroxysm of uncontrollable grief followed another. She refused to be pacified or consoled, declaring that she did not wish to live longer, that her future was hopeless and full of terrors and insisting that death was the only solace. But she was still a young woman and constitutionally strong. This saved her. As time passed, her outbursts of grief became less violent and gradually she grew calmer. She still mourned her lost happiness, but she now awoke to the fact that she had a child to live for, and her conscience told her that while there was still duty to be done, her own sorrow was only selfish. She clasped her little daughter to her bosom and resolved to live and be happy again for her sake.

She decided to leave forever the scenes associated with the wretched past—Pittsburg, New York, Boston—and to go South, where no one would recognize her under the name of Mrs. Vincent as the wife whom the millionaire steel maker had deserted. Bidding farewell to Grace, Mrs. Dexter and her other friends, she went to Virginia where she believed she could start life anew and forget. When her affairs were

settled, with the kind assistance of Mr. Stetson, she found she had an income of \$10,000 a year, which was more than sufficient for her ample wants, and her first step was to purchase The Arbor, situated only a few miles out of Richmond, and which appealed to her not only for the natural beauty of its site and environs, but because it offered that seclusion from the world which she sought.

So, in this idyllic spot, far from the noise, turmoil and excitement of the big cities, living tranquilly with her child amidst the flowers she loved so well, Eunice had found a haven of comparative contentment and peace. She could not banish the past altogether from her memory, she was unable to blot out entirely Roy's image from her heart, but as the years passed the wound became less painful. Wearied and crushed in spirit, here at least she could rest after life's rough journey, and devote the remainder of her days to the bringing up and education of her child—his child.

She had heard nothing of Roy directly since the day she left Altonia. From time to time she saw his name mentioned in the Richmond newspapers, but as the paragraphs always evoked cruel memories she preferred not to see them. She knew vaguely that he had resigned from the steel company, a step which she had long expected, and she understood that he had become a big operator in Wall Street. Beyond that she knew nothing. Sometimes she found herself

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wondering if he were happier now than before or if he ever felt regret. But she never willingly permitted her thoughts to travel in that direction. That part of her life was a sealed book forever.

One old friend only had accompanied mother and daughter to their new home and that was the faithful Eunice had been very fond of the girl ever since the Glendale days when she first went to them to act as nurse for poor little Teddy. When later they moved to Altonia she was for a time Eunice's personal maid, but when little Grace arrived she was given charge of the baby and she grew so attached to her ward that gradually she had become an indispensable part of the Marshall household. fronted, therefore, with the alternative of parting with Grace or sharing their exile, the girl had willingly followed them, much to Eunice's satisfaction, for not only did she regard her as a friend and companion but she could be implicitly trusted, and she, Eunice, was spared all anxiety in regard to Grace.

In addition to Katy there was Liza, an elderly colored cook, a typical Southern mammy, fat and goodnatured, who had been with them ever since they first came to Richmond. These two woman servants, together with Pete, a colored handy man who looked after the furnace, cut wood and took care of the horse and buggy, constituted their entire household. Eunice had not been long in making friends in the

neighborhood. She had rather avoided people of her own class, but the poorer folk of the district soon found that they were made welcome at The Arbor. Nothing pleased Eunice so much as to fill her arms with packages of delicacies for the sick, or bundles of clothing for the destitute, and go from cabin to cabin, from farm house to farm house, distributing her largesse, little Grace trotting gravely along at her side, unconsciously absorbing the object lesson in altruism. It was the same Eunice as of old. Only the time and place were different.

Thus what with her own domestic duties, looking after Grace, attending to the needs of the numerous pensioners, or fostering the growth of her beloved flowers Eunice found the time pass quickly and pleasantly enough, and that was now just why she had replied to Grace that she had no reason to complain.

Her reflections were suddenly disturbed by a stentorian voice calling from the porch:

"O Missy Vincent! Missy Vincent! Yes, marm!" Eunice and Grace looked up. It was Mammy—rotund and comfortable, her white teeth glistening, her broad shiny face expanded in a grin.

"O Missy Vincent, marm! Is you seen Katy? I search everywhere but she ain't nowhere—no, marm!"

Eunice could not refrain from laughing, Liza rolled her eyes so ludicrously.

"I sent Katy to the stores," she said. "She'll be

back presently. See, there she is now," she added, pointing up the road.

Grace dropped her rake and ran to meet her nurse, who held up something white as she came along.

"A letter, probably," said Eunice. "I told her to drop in at the Post Office and see if there was anything for us."

Yes, it was a letter. Eunice took it, recognizing the envelope which bore the familiar letter head of her old attorney, Richard Stetson. She wondered what he could be writing to her about. The envelope seemed bulky, too. She tore it open, and found it contained another smaller letter which was sealed. There was a brief note from Mr. Stetson explaining that the enclosed letter addressed to her had come in their care and that they had immediately forwarded it.

Glancing at the superscription on the enclosed envelope, Eunice turned deathly pale. Only too well did she know that handwriting. For a moment her heart stood still, then started beating with redoubled energy. Roy had written to her after all these years!

She glanced round furtively, afraid that she had betrayed her emotion, but no one was watching her. Grace was playing with Katy, and Liza had disappeared. Quietly leaving them in the garden, Eunice hurried to the house and took refuge in her bedroom, where she bolted the door and once more took up and examined the letter.

It was dated two days previous and bore the New York post mark. The writing was certainly Roy's, although there was something about it that looked unusual. It seemed shaky and uncertain. She wanted to tear it open and then she stopped. Was it right for her to receive letters from him? Should she open it and read what he had to say or was it more dignified to return it to him unopened? What could he have to say to her after all these years? Why open old wounds? Yet why should she not? It must be something important or he would not have written There was no good reason why she should not treat him the same as any other stranger who sent her a communication. They were now nothing to each other. The past was past. There was no further reason for hostility or rancour on either side. woman's natural curiosity helped to enforce these arguments and with trembling fingers she broke the seal. The letter read as follows:

"No. — Gramercy Park,
"New York City.

[&]quot;DEAR-STILL DEAR AND BELOVED EUNICE!

[&]quot;Only one thing could ever give me the courage to address you again in this old familiar way—the knowledge that I shall soon be beyond all human animosities. I am dying, Eunice. I was fatally stricken in my office yesterday and the doctors say I cannot live much longer. It is heart trouble, aggravated by worry and this exciting, feverish life I have led. But it does not frighten me—the thought of death. On the contrary, I welcome it as a blessed re-

lief to my mental tortures, the anguish of which I cannot describe. But what is the use of talking now about remorse-regret for my past insane follies? I have forfeited all right to appeal to you. My bitterest moments are when I stop to realize the cruel wrong I did you. You, probably, have nothing but contempt and scorn for me in your heart, yet you were always charitable and sympathetic to others. you are not entirely deaf to mercy for me. I would die easier, Eunice, if I could hear from your lips that you have forgiven me. In the hour of death we throw off the cloak of proud reserve, human wrongs fade away as nothing in the presence of the Eternal. are only frail children of Nature, regretting our follies, beseeching pardon of those we have wronged. I would like to see you, Eunice, before I die-just once more-to feel your soft cool hand on my hot brow, to look into your tranquil gray eyes and read there that you nourish no resentment. Don't refuse to come, Eunice. It is the last prayer of a dying man. Come to me not as to your husband who wronged you, but as to a human being who needs you to soothe his last moments. Come quickly. There is not much time. It is the Roy." last service I shall ever ask of you.

The letter dropped from Eunice's nerveless grasp and she sank onto a chair, faint and sick and trembling in all her being. Roy ill—dying! Such an eventuality had never occurred to her as being within the range of possibilities. Scalding tears filled her eyes as she pictured him lying all alone there in New York, and her heart was stirred by infinite pity. After all, he had been all in the world to her once, he was the father of her child. One forgives and forgets everything at such a crisis as this. A big lump seemed

to rise up in her throat and be choking her. Bowing her head over the back of the chair, she wept bitterly. But it was only a moment's weakness. A moment later she rose from her chair, a look of resolution on her face. It was a time not for tears, but for action. Going to the window, she called:

- "Katy!"
- "Yes, m'm!" replied the girl.
- "Have Pete harness the horse at once, and come up and help me pack a few things. I'm going to catch the four o'clock train for New York."

It was nine o'clock the next morning when Eunice reached Gramercy Park, that last oasis of dignified quiet and well-bred refinement left in the heart of the big metropolis. The house was on the left side of the square as her hansom entered from Fourth Avenue and the tan bark which had been laid on the street to deaden the noise indicated plainly enough that she had arrived at her destination. At first she did not dare look at the house, fearing to be confronted by some terrible and unmistakable sign. Seeing nothing, she was reassured. Thank God, she was not too late! She went up the steep stoop, to the old-fashioned portico which was hidden almost entirely with ivy, and her heart beating violently, she rang the

muffled bell. The door opened almost instantly and a man servant appeared.

"I wish to see Mr. Marshall," said Eunice timidly and stepping inside.

The man shook his head.

"Impossible, madame," he said in a tone as if surprised at the unreasonableness of the request. "Mr. Marshall can't see any one. He is very ill, madame, very ill indeed."

But Eunice brushed past him.

"He will see me," she said imperiously and with a tone of authority which made the man stare. "Mr. Marshall expects me. Which is his room?"

"One flight up, madame, in the front," replied the man more deferentially.

Eunice went up the broad, thickly carpeted staircase. On the first landing she found further progress barred by a trained nurse who, attracted by the altercation downstairs, had sailed out of the sick room armed with all the authority of her professional uniform to see what was the matter.

"Which is Mr. Marshall's room?" demanded Eunice.

"You cannot see Mr. Marshall," said the nurse firmly. "His condition is extremely critical. The slightest excitement might prove fatal. The doctors have forbidden visitors absolutely." "I must see him," said Eunice firmly. "He expects me."

"Are you one of the family?" inquired the nurse, still preventing her further advance.

Taken by surprise, Eunice for the moment did not know what to reply. Then quickly recovering her self-possession, she said with an effort:

"Yes-I am his wife!"

The nurse immediately fell back with a murmured apology.

"Excuse me, madam, we have to be so careful. Your husband is very low."

Eunice, her heart sinking, every fibre trembling with suppressed emotion, passed on into a large darkened chamber. Coming in from the light, at first she could hardly see anything. Then, gradually, the outlines of a bed became visible, and in it she saw a man lying as if asleep. Fearing to wake him, she stopped short on the threshold.

"You can go right in," said the nurse. "He is not asleep. He's been lying like that for hours. I think he must have been waiting for you, for at times he has muttered indistinctly something that sounded like: 'Will she come?'"

"Is he dangerously ill?" she whispered to the nurse, her eyes filling with tears.

"Yes," she answered, "we didn't expect he'd get through the night."

Eunice could scarcely control herself. She felt if she could only burst into a violent hysterical fit of weeping what a relief it would be.

She advanced into the room and approached the bed softly. Roy's eyes were turned toward the window and he did not see her enter. If he heard the step, he probably thought it was the nurse, for he did not move.

For a minute Eunice stood looking at him, restraining only with difficulty the impulse to throw herself on her knees sobbing by the side of the bed. How changed he was, how thin and gray! Ah, it was easy to see that he had suffered. She called him gently by name:

" Roy!"

It was so low that it sounded like the whispering of the wind. Yet the sick man heard it. He started up, but the effort was too much for him and he sank back exhausted on his pillow.

" Rov!"

He turned and saw her. A glad light came into his eyes, a flush overspread his ashen-gray face and he extended an emaciated hand. With a little cry Eunice sprang forward and sank down by the bed, burying her face in the clothes, unwilling that he should see she was crying. The nurse had discreetly withdrawn.

- "So you came—after all!" he said in a weak voice.
 "It was good of you to come."
- "Why didn't you let me know sooner?" she moaned.
 "You should have telegraphed."
- "I didn't know where you were. I wrote to Mr. Stetson asking him to forward the letter. Besides," he added with painful hesitation, "I have no claim upon you."

She rose and sat in the chair by his bedside.

"The sick always have a claim upon those who have health," she answered evasively. "If I had been sent for immediately, perhaps matters would not be so serious."

Roy shook his head and a sudden spasm of pain made him wince.

"No, Eunice, no earthly power can save me now. It's all up with me—it's the end of the game. Last night I thought I was dying—my heart seemed to stop—I felt myself sinking—a deathly chill came over me, but I fought against it, I struggled to live because something told me you would come."

Unable to control herself, Eunice was weeping silently, the tears coursing down her cheeks unrestrained until they fell on Roy's hand which still clasped hers.

"Don't cry, Eunice dear," he said gently, "it is better so. Death is the only expiation I can offer for the wrong I did you. Don't think I have not suffered

all these years. Long ago I discovered that I had thrown my happiness away. Day and night I have been haunted by thoughts of you. I have seen your face, wistfully reproaching me, wherever I was, whatever I was doing. I felt I could not die in peace until I had heard from your own lips that you had forgiven me."

"I forgave you long ago, Roy," she murmured between her sobs.

- "And my little daughter? Is she well?"
- "She is well and happy."
- "And you-are you happy?"
- "I am contented. We have a beautiful home down South, I am happy in caring for my child."
- "Then I can die in peace," he murmured, sinking back on his pillow, his eyes half closed.

Eunice, alarmed, rose and bent over him.

"Roy! Roy!" she cried.

He opened his eyes and smiled feebly at her. She took his thin hand in hers and pressing it to her lips, fell on her knees by the bed.

"Don't talk of death, Roy!" she cried. "Live! Live for my sake. We can still be happy together. The law has separated us, but those whom God has mated no man may put asunder. I love you, Roy! I have never ceased to love you—all these years—in spite of all. You have suffered—you have atoned.



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Roy—husband—live and get well for my sake! Come back to your wife and child!"

Roy listened with eyes wide open, as if doubting the evidence of his ears. He rose, by a superhuman effort, to a sitting posture, a look of exultant joy came over his face, he stretched out his arms and Eunice fell on his breast, his tears mingling with hers.

Suddenly, he gasped for air and put his hand to his heart. His face grew livid and he fell back on his pillow. Eunice, in an agony of fear, called:

"Nurse! Nurse!"

The nurse entered quickly and hurried to the bed. For a moment she stood over him, her hand on his pulse. Suddenly her face became grave.

"Shall I telephone for the doctor?" asked Eunice anxiously.

The nurse shook her head.

"It is useless," she said. "He is past all aid."

THE END





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THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

